

A Reference Grammar
of
Classical Tamil Poetry

V. S. RAJAM

A Reference Grammar of Classical Tamil Poetry

(150 B.C.—pre-fifth/sixth century A.D.)

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TO

the waters of the Porunai

which nurtured my dear parents

and

the land of the Vaiyai

where my revered teachers revealed to me

the beauty of Tamil

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PREFACE

The following book is intended to be a reference tool for those who seek an understanding of the structure of classical Tamil poetry. Classical Tamil poetry reflects indigenous literary and cultural traditions of southern India, and therefore, a study of it is imperative for obtaining a balanced view of India's past and present cultures. The language which produced this poetry, Tamil, is the only living language of modern India that has an uninterrupted history spanning more than two millennia, and therefore, a study of it becomes even more crucial for a thorough understanding of India's linguistic complexity.

I faced a most difficult challenge when writing this book—to approach the task with an open mind about the formal properties of classical Tamil. Once I accomplished a detachment from preconceived notions, a fresh world opened out for me which was the most gratifying experience. Whenever I came across a different linguistic form or whenever I thought of a different way of viewing things, I was truly excited, almost like a child off from school without any assignment, playing in her own yard trying to catch every snowflake at the first snowfall of the season. Indeed, language reflects a dynamic process like the accumulation of snow, but with a difference. It's dimensions constantly change with each influx from every direction but, unlike the snow, it has a perennial, fluid, and diasporic existence in some form or other. And it is possible to catch at least some snowflakes before they merge with the rest, but one has to be there when they reach the earth.

The seed of my passion for Tamil poetry and grammar was sown in high school when I had to memorize along with poetry some verses from a traditional medieval grammatical treatise in Tamil known as the Nannul (*Nannūl*). Thanks to the good old days of learning when most everything was based on memorizing things, whether lovely ancient poetry or dry grammatical rules, these “sounded” nice and that was sufficient reason to commit them to memory. But it was not until I read one of Browning's poems in college, that I was captivated by the perseverance and dedication that grammar could bring to one's character. Browning wrote about a grammarian:

“

Back to his book then: deeper dropped his head:

Calculus racked him:

Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:

Tussis attacked him.

... ..

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife;
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business -- let it be! --

... ..

[*The Poetical Works of Robert Browning*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1974:279-280]

In my case, calculus could not compete with the fascination provided by grammar, literature, and linguistics during my graduate years in Madurai and Philadelphia when I had the opportunity to learn materials more ancient and more modern than *Nannūl*. However, my earlier understanding of Tamil poetry and grammar deepened and took numerous positive turns only when I imparted them to native speakers of Tamil in Madurai and to non-native speakers here in the United States. And it is my Western students and colleagues who alerted me to the lack of a systematic and rigorous tool that would aid them to study classical Tamil. Therefore, my gratitude for the existence of this book starts with my Western friends of Tamil and goes back to my former students and teachers in Madurai.

First I wish to record my gratitude for my teachers who greatly influenced my understanding and appreciation of Tamil poetry and grammar: Mrs. Sarada Krishnamoorthy, Dr. C. Ilakkuvanar, Sri. Avvai Duraisamy Pillai, Sri. A.K. Parantamanar, Dr. Sp. Annamalai, Dr. N. Balusamy, Sri. Kati. Sundaram, Sri. N. Sankaranarayanan, Dr. M. Sundaram, and Dr. Durai Arangasamy.

Writing a book such as this does not just happen without the participation of colleagues and friends who encourage the effort. In the process, I drew upon the expertise of most everyone whom I knew was interested in pre-modern Tamil of Western Linguistics applicable to the study of classical languages. They carefully read through either my original proposal for this volume or sections which developed later into chapters, and always provided useful suggestions. In short, for providing help at crucial junctures to give a momentum and make this volume more user friendly, I thank Ernest Bender (U of Pennsylvania), Rahul Bonner (U of Chicago), George Cardona (U of Pennsylvania), Norman Cutler (U of Chicago), Henry Hoenigswald (U of Pennsylvania), Jim Lindholm (Tamil Language Study Association, Chicago), Leigh Lisker (U of Pennsylvania), J. Neethivanan (Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai), S.

Palaniappan (Dallas), Paula Richman (Oberlin College), Ludo Rocher (U of Pennsylvania), and Franklin Southworth (U of Pennsylvania). I thank Professor A.K. Ramanujan (U of Chicago) and Columbia University Press for giving me permission to use the translation of the classical Tamil poem, *puranānūru* 278, in *Poems of Love and War*, A.K. Ramanujan, 1985, Columbia University Press, New York.

Three colleagues deserve special mention for their very special contribution to this volume and I am indebted to them. For well over a decade, David Ludden has been a constant source of support for my teaching and research at the University of Pennsylvania. He patiently read through the first draft of the entire volume, and his detailed comments contributed to the improved second draft. I am thankful for his continued interest in Tamil. David Shulman (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) enthusiastically read large sections of the second draft and with his brilliant insight provided encouragement to my accomplishment of the pre-publication copy. He also generously provided a poetic translation of a classical Tamil poem, *ainkurunūru* 423, which I have used in the last chapter. I am fortunate for having established an everlasting contact with this star. With his endless patience and flair for poetry, George L. Hart (U of California, Berkeley) translated especially for this volume, a very challenging complex classical Tamil poem, *akanānūru* 9, which appears in the last chapter. As one of the reviewers of the manuscript for publication, he suggested that I expand the chapter on classical Tamil meter. This suggestion gave me an excellent opportunity to provide certain details about classical Tamil poems which I would not otherwise have had in my intention not to overwhelm the readers. I used the Tamil and TimesIndian fonts he has developed for the Apple Macintosh computer for creating the text base and doing the analysis for an ongoing project, of which this volume is a part.

My thanks are also due to the other anonymous reviewer of the manuscript for the American Philosophical Society and to Bruce Perry (U of Pennsylvania) and Elliot Stern (U of Pennsylvania) who originally provided editorial suggestions for improving the manuscript. I thank Jerome H. Bauer (U of Pennsylvania) whose TimesII font enabled me to use certain special Roman characters in this volume and Branavan Ganesan (U of Pennsylvania) who assisted me in drawing the diagrams which appear in the last chapter.

The brilliant suggestions by Richard Cohen, John Mosteller, Rosane Rocher, and Guy Welbon (all at the U of Pennsylvania) turned the task of desk-top publishing into a worthy pursuit. Carol Brecken-

ridge's (Editor, *Public Culture*, University of Pennsylvania) remarkable editing expertise transformed the chore into a labor of love.

I am grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities, and to Ms. Helen Agüera (NEH), for having supported the creation of this volume. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the Department of South Asia Regional Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and in particular, the successive chairpersons, Rosane Rocher, Alan Heston, and Arjun Appadurai, for kindly supporting my ongoing project to create a Historical Reference Grammar of pre-modern Tamil. I sincerely thank the American Philosophical Society for publishing this volume in their Memoirs series. It was very pleasant to work with Ms. Carole Le Faivre (Associate Editor, American Philosophical Society) who was patient and generous with her time. I thank her for her meticulous care and guidance.

Two people at the homefront are owed my deepest indebtedness: my grandfather, V.S. Swaminatha Iyer, who initiated my love for Tamil in my childhood by bribing me with mangoes and half-anna coins for memorizing *tirukkural* couplets; and my son Rajkumar who silently and graciously tolerated my lack of attention whenever I had to retreat into my own universe for producing this book later in my life.

Philadelphia, 1992

V.S.R.

CONVENTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS STUDY

1. The transliteration scheme in modern Tamil is as follows. Read from the top to the bottom.

Roman	Tamil	Roman	Tamil
a	அ	ñ	ஞ்
ā	ஆ	t	ட்
i	இ	ṇ	ண்
ī	ஈ	t	த்
u	உ	n	ந்
ū	ஊ	p	ப்
e	எ	m	ம்
ē	ஏ	y	ய்
ai	ஐ	r	ர்
o	ஓ	l	ல்
ō	ஔ	v	வ்
au	ஔ	l	ழ்
ḥ	ஃ	l	ள்
k	க	r	ற்
ñ	ங்	ṇ	ன்
c	ச்		

In the transliteration of Tamil words, the names of books, places, and persons begin with upper case letters, while the names of the poems surveyed for the study do not.

2 - Conventions

2. Alphabetical order:

Letters without diacritical marks come before similar letters with diacritical marks, e.g., *a* precedes *ā*. When Tamil examples alone are involved, the modern Tamil alphabetical order (given above) is followed.

3. Abbreviations and notations:

adjp	adjectival participle
advp	adverbial participle
aiṅk	<i>aiṅkurunūru</i> (ஐங்குறுநூறு)
aka	<i>akanāṇūru</i> (அகநானூறு)
caus	causative
cey	<i>ceyyuḷiyal</i> , a chapter on Tamil prosody in the third book of the <i>Tolkāppiyam</i>
cilap	<i>cilappatikāram</i>
ciṟu	<i>ciṟupāṇārruppaṭai</i> (சிறுபாணாற்றுப்படை)
excl	exclusive
ḷam	<i>ḷampūraṇar</i> , a traditional commentator
incl	inclusive
kali	<i>kalittokai</i> (கலித்தொகை)
ka.vā	<i>kaṭavuḷ vāḷttu</i> (கடவுள் வாழ்த்து, "invocation")
kuṟi	<i>kuṟiṅcippāṭṭu</i> (குறிஞ்சிப்பாட்டு)
kuṟu	<i>kuṟuntokai</i> (குறுந்தொகை)
malai	<i>malaipaṭukaṭām</i> (மலைபடுகடாம்)
matu	<i>maturaikkāñci</i> (மதுரைக்காஞ்சி)
maṇi	<i>maṇimēkalai</i> (மணிமேகலை)
mull	<i>mullaippāṭṭu</i> (முல்லைப்பாட்டு)
mutt	<i>muttoḷḷāyiram</i> (முத்தொள்ளாயிரம்)
Nacc	<i>Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar</i> , a traditional commentator
naṟṟ	<i>naṟṟiṇai</i> (நற்றிணை)
neṭu	<i>neṭunalvāṭai</i> (நெடுநல்வாடை)
pari	<i>paripāṭal</i> (பரிபாடல்)

pari.ti	<i>paripāṭal tiraṭṭu</i> (பரிபாடல் திரட்டு; an appendix to the <i>paripāṭal</i>)
pati	<i>patirruppattu</i> (பதிறுப்பத்து)
pati.pati	<i>patirruppattup patikam</i> (பதிறுப்பத்துப் பதிகம் an epilogue at the end of a batch of ten poems in பதிறுப்பத்து)
paṭṭ	<i>paṭṭinappālai</i> (பட்டினப்பாலை)
peru	<i>perumpāṇārruppaṭai</i> (பெரும்பாணாற்றுப்படை)
Pē	<i>Pērācīriyar</i> , a traditional commentator
pl	plural
PNG	person-number-gender, person-number-gender suffix
poru	<i>porunarārruppaṭai</i> (பொருநராற்றுப்படை)
puṛa	<i>puṛaṇāṇūru</i> (புறநானூறு)
sg	singular
suff	suffix
tiru	<i>tirumurukārruppaṭai</i> (திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை)
trans	transitive
<	“derived from”
>	“becomes, changes to”
+	“added”
±	“may or may not be added”
*	An item marked with an asterisk, *, does not occur in that particular form but is reconstructed from related forms.

4. Definition/identification of selected items:

Affix:

a linguistically significant item consisting of one or more letters that is appended to a stem or another affix.

4 - Conventions

Anthologies, The:

the **caṅkam** classics or classical Tamil poems;

the **eṭṭuttokai** and the **pattuppāṭṭu**;

The *akanāṇṇūru*, *aiṅkuṇūru*, *kalittokai*, *kuṇuntokai*, *narrīnai*, *paṭirruppattu*, *paripāṭal*, and *puranāṇṇūru* are the **eṭṭuttokai** poems.

The *kuṛiṅcippāṭṭu*, *cīrupāṇārruppaṭai*, *tirumurukārruppaṭai*, *neṭunalvāṭai*, *paṭṭiṇappālai*, *perumpāṇārruppaṭai*, *porunarārruppaṭai*, *maturaikkāñci*, *malaipaṭukaṭām*, and *mullaippāṭṭu* are the **pattuppāṭṭu** poems.

Aṭiyārkkunallār (ca. fourteenth century A.D):

a traditional commentator on the literary work, the *Cilappatikāram*.

Cilappatikāram (ca. fifth century A.D):

the first long narrative poem (= epic) in Tamil; composed by Iṅkovaṭikaḷ

Cēṇāvaraiyar (ca. fourteenth century A.D):

a traditional commentator on the *Tolkāppiyam*.

Closing consonant:

a consonant which ends a syllable.

Commentators, traditional:

erudite Tamils who wrote commentaries on Tamil grammars and poetry.

Consonants, homorganic:

consonants which have the same point of articulation.

Iṅampūraṇar (ca. tenth to eleventh centuries A.D.):

a traditional commentator on the *Tolkāppiyam*.

Like-consonants:

consonants which are the same: e.g., **k** and **k**; **m** and **m**.

Marker:

an affix appended to a stem; it signifies a certain grammatical concept; here used interchangeably with “affix” or “suffix.”

Maṇimēkalai (ca. sixth century A.D.):

the second long narrative poem (= epic) in Tamil; composed by Cīttalai-c-Cāttanār

Muttoḷḷāyiram:

a post-classical text; contains 103 verses in the **veṇṇā** meter.

Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar (ca. thirteenth century A.D.):

a traditional commentator on the *Tolkāppiyam* and several other literary texts including the **kalittokai**, one of the poems in the anthology called the **eṭṭuttokai**.

Naṇṇūl:

a traditional grammar of Tamil; thirteenth/fourteenth century A.D.

nāṇmaṇikkaṭikai

a post-classical text; included in the *Paṭiṇeṇkīḷkkaṇakku*

Open syllable:

a syllable which does not end with a consonant.

“Optional”:

what is otherwise known as “free variation.”

Parimēlaḷakar (ca. thirteenth century A.D.):

the earliest known commentator on the **paripāṭal**, one of the poems in the anthology called the **eṭṭuttokai**.

Paṭiṇeṇkīḷkkaṇakku

an anthology of eighteen post-classical didactic poems

Pērācīriyar (ca. fourteenth century A.D.):

a traditional commentator on the *Tolkāppiyam* and some other literary works.

Short syllable:

a syllable which has a short vowel.

6 - Conventions

Stem:

root + formative suffix; used in this study in synonymity with the term “root.”

Suffix:

the last affix that is added to the right of a stem or another affix.

Syllable:

a sequence of letters having one of the following patterns: (C)V(C)(C) and (C) \bar{V} (C)(C) where C is a consonant, V is a short vowel and \bar{V} is a long vowel. Examples are given below. Selected syllables illustrating some syllabic patterns are given in bold type. The syllabic pattern is given under column 3.

உயர்த்து	உ - யர்த் - து (u-yart-tu)	V-CVCC-CV
உரைக்கல்லாதவர்	உ - ரைக் - கல் - லா - த - வர் (u-raik-kal-lā-ta-var)	V-C \bar{V} C-CVC-C \bar{V} -CV-CVC
சேர்த்தி	சேர்த் - தி (cērt-ti)	C \bar{V} CC-CV

Permissible consonant clusters are rule-governed. See “Phonology.”

Syllable with a closing consonant:

a syllable which ends with a consonant; a syllable of the pattern (C)VC or (C) \bar{V} C(C). Examples are given below. The syllable with a closing consonant is given in bold type. The syllabic pattern is given under column 3.

அங் - கு	aṅ-ku	VC-CV
----------	-------	-------

அ - டங் - கு	a-ṭaṅ-ku	V-CVC-CV
ஆட் - டு	āṭ-tu	VC-CV
இ - றைஞ் - சு	i-ṛaiñ-cu	V-CVC-CV
ஊழ்த் - து	ūḷt-tu	VC-CV
காட் - டு	kāṭ-tu	CVC-CV
நல் - கு	nal-ku	CVC-CV
வீழ்த் - து	vīḷt-tu	CVC-CV

Tolkāppiyam:

the first extant traditional grammar of Tamil; written in Tamil and applicable to classical Tamil poetry; pre-fifth century A.D.

Traditional grammars:

grammars of Tamil written in Tamil from before or the beginning of the Christian era up to the nineteenth century. These grammars do not follow the Latin model of grammatical description used by Western missionaries from the sixteenth century on.

Yāpparunḱalakkārikai (tenth century A.D.):

also known as *kārikai*; a medieval treatise on Tamil prosody.

5. The anthologies as sources for this study:

Only published material which is reliable and widely accepted was used for the study, not the palm-leaf manuscripts. The editions by U.V. Saminathier, S. Vaiyapurippillai, and the South India Tirunelveli Saiva Siddhantha Publishing Works were used. Variant readings of words/phrases in the poems were also taken into consideration.

6. Punctuation:

The system recommended by the Modern Language Association (MLA) is followed, with some exceptions: e.g., selected Tamil words and a few other words are given in bold type in order to focus the attention.

8 - Conventions

7. Tamil Script:

Modern Tamil script is used in this study. However, the recently introduced reformed scheme of writing is not adopted mainly for the reason that the books of classical Tamil poems referred to in this study do not follow that scheme. Therefore, for example, the “reformed” **கை** is written in this study as **கை**; **கை** is written as **கை**, etc.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Tamil

Tamil (தமிழ்), one of the two classical languages of India, is the only language in that country which has continued to exist for over two thousand years. It is spoken today by approximately 65 million people living mainly in southern India, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Africa, Fiji, the West Indies, Mauritius and Reunion Islands, United Kingdom, United States, and Canada. It is the pre-eminent member of the Dravidian language family and has one of the longest unbroken literary traditions of any living language in the world. Dravidian is one of the four language groups represented now by about 100 million speakers in India, the other three groups being Munda, Tibeto-Chinese, and Indo-Aryan. The major Dravidian languages are Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, and Kannada, each of which has its own script system and highly sophisticated literature.

Classical Tamil

As the classical language of peninsular India, Tamil has produced a unique world class literature which belongs to its classical period (pre-fifth/sixth century A.D.). This literature is known as the **caṅkam** (= Sangam) literature and the language it reflects is “classical Tamil.” The qualifier, “classical,” here is relative in the sense that the qualified, “Tamil,” is still thriving, now in the form of “modern Tamil.” Between the two extremities, “classical” and “modern,” one can discuss post-classical, medieval, and pre-modern periods spanning about two millennia, and their uninterrupted production of literatures and grammars.

The **caṅkam** literature, also called the **caṅkam** classics or classical Tamil poems, actually refer to two large compilations of numerous individual poems, the **eṭṭuttokai** (‘the eight anthologies’) and the **pattuppāṭṭu** (‘the ten songs’).¹ These poems, which originated from an oral bardic tradition, are believed to have been written down on palm-leaf manuscripts between the second century B.C. and the fourth to fifth century A.D. Attributed to 473 poets, the total number of these poems is 2,381, the shortest of which is 3 lines long (e.g., *aiṅkuṟunūru* 121) and the longest, 782 (*maturaikkāñci*). Altogether, they add up to approximately 50,000 lines, most of which contain four metrical feet, known by the term **cīr**, per line and a few containing two, three or five, and rarely six. The metrics of these poems is discussed in “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry.”

It is significant that classical Tamil literature evidences the indigenous linguistic, literary, and cultural traditions of southern India. Moreover, this body of literature is the only source for gaining a fair knowledge of a pre-Indo-Aryanized southern India. These poems employ unique literary conventions to express sentiments such as clandestine love, marital fidelity,

¹ For detailed introductions to these works, see Ramanujan (1985:ix-xiv) and Zvelebil (1975:5-21, 89-107).

jealousy, and pride and to celebrate such themes as war, philanthropy, royal patronage, and philosophy. More importantly, traces of the ancient Tamil country's contact with the rest of the world, cultural diffusion within India, origins of Tamil urbanization, local kingdoms, and devotion to personal gods ("bhakti") can all be discerned from these poems. Therefore, it is not surprising that Western scholars of classical Tamil literature have shown that it merits a place of importance within India and among world literature, while students of history and culture state that Tamil-speaking people have made major contributions to the development of Indian civilization. It is certainly not an overstatement when Ramanujan (1985:ix) astutely comments that not to know this poetry "is not to know a unique and major poetic achievement of Indian civilization."

Classical Tamil poems are the earliest extant linguistic documents of Tamil and contain the oldest attestations of Dravidian words. Furthermore, a preliminary survey of later texts with the formal properties of classical Tamil poetry as points of reference clearly demonstrates that a good understanding of the language employed in the latter will facilitate one's understanding of later Tamil in general, and later Tamil poetry in particular. Thus, in the final analysis, a study of classical Tamil becomes crucial for a thorough and complete understanding of the cultural spectrum of India and for a better understanding of the languages and literatures of the world.

The Study of Classical Tamil in the Past

Due to historical circumstances, a knowledge of classical Tamil poetry suffered a setback in the Tamil country which produced it. The poems had to be interpreted for the benefit of those who wanted to study them, and therefore there arose several commentaries on them. The most popular traditional commentator on these poems, U.V. Saminathier, explains how these secular poems were rescued from oblivion and studied in the

nineteenth century after they had been stigmatized as irreligious along with certain other literary works.² Even after their rediscovery, the study of these poems demanded special training in the twentieth century since the language had changed considerably between the time of their composition and the time of their rebirth. In addition, the interpretations of these poems which were provided by medieval commentators and followed by the commentators of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had been influenced by post-classical and medieval Tamil and also by non-Tamil traditions. Consequently, the combination of language change in the form of loss of lexical items, formative changes in old words, semantic change, and the complexity in the narrative style of the commentaries made many classical Tamil poems difficult and enigmatic and sometimes gave a distorted view of the poems and of the language itself. Actually, this situation deserves a separate study. One could obtain abundant information on this matter just by comparing classical Tamil poems with their commentaries, while keeping them carefully apart. Here, a few examples might help a motivated reader appreciate the predicament of the commentators who had to labor over damaged palm-leaf manuscripts in order to revive these poems and their old commentaries and the consequences of such painstaking efforts.

(a) Many classical Tamil words have been categorically treated as “sound fillers” or “particles” by the commentators, perhaps because those words had become obsolete by their time. The term they use to refer to these words is **acai**. **kurai** is one such word which can very well be interpreted to mean ‘quality, nature, characteristic, attribute.’ Examples of the usage of this word are given in “The Particles” in this study. Another such word is **āṅka** which could be understood to mean ‘thus, in that manner.’ Even in those contexts where this word ought to be treated as a certain type of metrical foot (**corcīr**) in a poem so as to be combined with

² Cf. Ramanujan (1985:xi-xiv).

the next line to make sense and to be noted by the prosodic term **vaḷi-y-acai** 'leading metrical unit', most commentators label them just as an **acai** which has led to the incorrect interpretation of it as a meaningless sound filler.³ See "The Particles" for examples of its usage.

Actually, the various items which are labelled as "**acai**" by traditional commentators do have significant semantic and prosodic functions in classical Tamil poetry. Perhaps, students of classical Tamil poetry should begin to understand the term "**acai**" (as used by the commentators) as referring to the basic metrical unit **acai**, rather than as a nonsensical sound filler. The commentators' cryptic usage of the term "**acai**," instead of specifying **urai-y-acai**, **oḷi-y-acai**, or **vaḷi-y-acai**, each of which has a specific prosodic function, has mislead many in the past to the underestimation of classical Tamil diction.

(b) Sometimes a word appears in classical Tamil in more than one form and one of the reasons seems to be that the form with an extra suffix can serve as a metrical foot (**cīr**) whereas the form without that suffix cannot. For example, the form **vaṇṭal** is longer than **vaṇṭu** and both mean 'sediment/deposit/soil'.⁴ The form **vaṇṭal** (**vaṇṭu** 'to collect, gather' + **al** verbal noun suffix) is a metrical foot of the pattern **nēr-nēr** while **vaṇṭu** is of the pattern **nērpū** and rarely occurs as a metrical foot in this period. The classical Tamil poet must have had a choice between these two forms, **vaṇṭu** and **vaṇṭal**, when he wanted to say something about the sediment/deposit/soil.

Nevertheless, the traditional commentator U.V. Saminathier interprets **vaṇṭu** as 'bees' instead of 'deposit/soil' as it is used in a classical Tamil

³ We do find the commentaries referring to the form **āṇku** as a refrain when it occurs as refrain (**kūṇ**): cf. the Old Commentary on *pati.26:4*. Even in such instances, **āṇku** 'thus, there, in that manner' could be understood as a meaningful word functioning as refrain.

⁴ The form **vaṇṭal** 'sediment/deposit' is just an extension of **vaṇṭu**. One may also note that the word **vaṇṭu** 'deposit' is related to **maṇṭu** which means 'to collect like sediment.'

poem: **vaṇṭu** mēmpaṭūum i-v-vaṇa-nilai āru ‘this cruel/bad river where the bees are overwhelming’ (*pura.263:4*). Then he notes that **vaṇṭu** could also refer to a group of warriors. In this context **vaṇṭu** neither means ‘bees’ nor does it refer to a group of warriors. It refers to the deposit in the river bed, and therefore the line under question means ‘this drying up river (**vaṇa nilai āru**) where its sediment/deposit/soil (**vaṇṭu**) is coming up (**mēmpaṭūum**).’⁵

Apparently, the entire Old Commentary on this poem was not available to Saminathier through damaged palm leaf manuscripts, so he had two choices: one was to understand the word **vaṇṭu** in its more common usage as “bees” and the other was to associate it with the name of a person, **Vaṇṭan**, which is used in another classical poem (*pati.31:22-23*): celvattu **vaṇṭan** aṇaiyai ‘You are like the wealthy **Vaṇṭan**.’ Unfortunately, it would seem that the usage **vaṇṭal** ‘deposit’ from other poems has escaped Saminathier’s attention (e.g., *pari.6:18*) or that he was expecting the form **vaṇṭal** instead of **vaṇṭu** if it had to mean ‘deposit.’ Other commentators follow Saminathier’s path. If these later commentators expected the form **vaṇṭal** instead of **vaṇṭu** to mean ‘sediment/deposit in a river bed’, it would only tell us that the contemporary form of the word had affected their understanding of the word in an earlier form in earlier poems.

(c) One crucial example will suffice to see how semantic or cultural change has colored the understanding of classical Tamil poems. The word **karpu** is understood today as meaning ‘chastity/marital fidelity (of a wom-

⁵ There is no doubt that one of the words for bees is **vaṇṭu**. One could make a semantic connection between **vaṇṭu** ‘bees’ which swarm and **vaṇṭu** ‘sediment/deposit’ which collects in a river bed. However, in the context of the poem under consideration, **vaṇṭu** could not mean ‘bees’, for the poem talks about a fallen hero who brought back a herd of stolen cattle through the drying up river. It is quite unlikely that the cattle moved through a river full of water or that bees were overwhelming in a river that was drying up.

an).’ It need not be, perhaps should not be, interpreted to mean ‘chastity of a woman’ in classical Tamil poems. This word is derived from **kal** ‘to learn by experience, to have maturity’ + **pu** verbal noun suffix, and is used in these poems, in connection with male, female, and even neuter things like words of (Vedic) chanting: cf. *eḷutā k karpu-in niṇ col* ‘your words of learning which are not written down’ (*kuṟu.156:5*).

However, the way in which modern commentators interpret this word in classical Tamil poems arouses curiosity about a possible bias reflecting change in socio-cultural values by their time. When the word **karpu** occurs in these poems with reference to a woman, the commentators do not interpret it. Rather, they simply repeat the word **karpu** in their commentary.⁶ But, when it occurs with reference to a man or a neuter object like words, they do not hesitate to interpret it as ‘learning/education’ (**kalvi**) in the modern sense of the word **kalvi**.⁷ Earlier commentators, perhaps confused about the term because both **karpu** and **kalvi** are derived from the same stem **kal**, clearly avoided any interpretation other than ‘learning’ (**kalvi**) when the word occurred with reference to a man.⁸

⁶ Cf. Saminathier’s commentary on *pati.90:49*.

⁷ Cf. Saminathier’s commentaries on *pati.43:31*, *pati.80:17*, and *kuṟu.156:5*. Faithfully following the Old Commentary, Saminathier even notes that *eḷutā-k-karpu* (*kuṟu.156:5*) means ‘education through learning the utterances that are not written down; that is to know (about) the Vedas’ (“*eḷutā k kiḷaviyai k karpa kalvi; atāvatu vētam uṇartal*”).

Note that there is just one occurrence of the word **kalvi** ‘education’ in classical Tamil: *kalviyeṇ eṇṇum val āṇ ciṟāṇ* ‘the skillful young male child who claims “I have learning/education”’ (*puṟa.346:3*). It can also be noted that when the stem **kal** occurs in a negative form **kallā**, commentators do not make any special mention of it (cf. the Old Commentary on *pati.48:7*) or interpret it as meaning ‘not learning the traditional job’ (cf. Saminathier’s commentary on *kuṟu.69:3*; Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *malai:312*).

⁸ Cf. the Old Commentary on *pati.43:31*, where the commentator remarks about the word **karpu** in the phrase *tolaityā k karpa*: “It is said **karpa**, because it means ‘You who

What makes this analysis more interesting is that later century commentators like U.V. Saminathier were fairly and unmistakably influenced by their predecessors. In this particular case, one can trace the treatment of the word **karpu** (as ‘chastity of a woman’) back to one medieval commentator, Aṭiyārkkunallār, who makes a clear distinction between two types of **karpu** as **āriya karpu** and **cīriya karpu** or **ara-k-karpu** and **maṛa-k-karpu** referring to the behavioral patterns of two women who figure in a post-classical Tamil text and conduct themselves in very different ways at the loss of their husbands.⁹ In effect, **āriya karpu** and **ara-k-karpu** mean the same, while **cīriya karpu** and **maṛa-k-karpu** mean the same. According to this commentator, it would seem, **āriya karpu** or **ara-k-karpu** refers to the subservient, docile, and gentle behavior of a woman, whereas **cīriya karpu** or **maṛa-k-karpu** refers to the wild behavior of an outraged woman. Whatever the significance of this commentator’s interpretation, one wonders why later commentators should use the same interpretation for the word **karpu** even when they explain classical Tamil poetry.¹⁰

have **kalvi**.’ They also say something else.” (“**karpu** eṇṇatu **kalviyai** uṭaiyāy eṇṇavāru. piṇṇitum uraiṇṇa”).

⁹ Cf. Aṭiyārkkunallār’s commentary quoted in Venkatasamy Nattar’s commentary on *cilappatikāram*, *patikam*:42.

¹⁰ Saminathier’s interpretation of the phrase **āriya karpu** as used in *pati*.90:49 is worth a note, where he quotes Aṭiyārkkunallār without even translating the phrase **āriya karpu** which could be understood as ‘undisturbed/profound learning/maturity’ in the context of the poem. Further, he seems to emphasize that the reference to men in terms of their kinship to a woman is due to the woman’s **karpu**. See Saminathier’s commentary on *pati*.65:10, where he says that the Cēra king is addressed as **cēyilāi kaṇava** ‘Husband of the woman (the queen) wearing red ornaments!’ because of the eminence of the queen’s **karpu**.

He adds a remark in this context that **Aiyai** is another woman with **karpu** and that her father **Aḥtai** is referred to as ‘**Aiyai**’s father’, because of **Aiyai**’s **karpu**. But in fact, classical Tamil poems do not contain any information about the character of this woman **Aiyai**. The commentators introduce her as a woman with **karpu**.

Even more interesting is how the phrases **āriya karpu/ara-k-karpu** and **cīriya karpu/māra-k-karpu** are understood today by modern Tamils respectively as ‘the chastity of a subservient woman’ and ‘the chastity of a wild, warrior-like woman’, because of the semantic function of the word **karpu** as ‘a woman’s chastity.’ This modern understanding of the word **karpu** would be fine as long as the same meaning is not imposed on its earliest usage in classical Tamil poems. Unfortunately, that does not seem to be the case.¹¹

Here, readers may note that both **karpu** (**kal** + **pu**) and **kalvi** (**kal** + **vi**) are derived from the same stem **kal** ‘to learn, mature’ and respectively mean ‘acquiring profundity’ and ‘acquiring traditional skills’ in classical Tamil poetry; and that at some point in time, ‘male profundity/learning’ (man’s **karpu**) was separated from the overall semantic realm of ‘profundity/learning’ (**karpu**) to be equated with acquiring traditional skills or education (**kalvi**), whereas ‘female profundity/learning’ (woman’s **karpu**) was restricted to mean ‘chastity.’ Naturally, commentators impose this later semantic structure on classical Tamil poetry.¹²

¹¹ In the Tamil tradition of learning and writing, it is normal not only to repeat the subject matter treated by earlier authors, but also to cherish like gold the very words spoken by those authors: **munṇōr mōli poruḷē anri avar mōliyum ponnē pōl pōrruvam** (Naṇṇūl, Rule 9). The many accounts given in some traditional commentaries about how texts were learned in pre-modern times tell us that the student learning a text more or less served as a medium for receiving the text from his teacher and transmitting it to the next generation of students. This mode of learning a text and imparting it to others must have demanded a rigid and loyal system of cherishing verbatim what was being learned. It is only fair that modern education and scholarship bear the vestige of the pre-modern system of cherishing the words of earlier authors.

¹² It may be noted that Subramanya Bharatiyar, a modern Tamil poet, was the first one to suggest that **karpu** ‘chastity, marital fidelity’ should be a quality that should be common to both men and women: **karpu** *nilai eṇṇu colla vantār iru katicckum annilai potuvil vaippōm*. Loosely translated, it means, ‘They talk about **karpu**. Let us keep that state as common to

(d) As for the narrative style of the commentators, the most striking aspects must be mentioned. Their prose, apparently influenced by Sanskrit, was overly braided with passive voice and causative constructions which only complicated the Tamil and perhaps affected later analyses of classical Tamil poems in the twentieth century. For example, a medieval commentator, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar, translates *nīṭi* 'getting long; having gotten long' as *vaḷara-p-paṭṭu* and *viḷai* 'growing' as *viḷaiya-p-paṭukinra*.¹³ The forms *vaḷara-p-paṭṭu* and *viḷaiya-p-paṭukinra* are constructions using the passive voice which are not needed for Tamil and are untranslatable into sensible English ('experiencing the growth' and 'that which experiences sprouting/growth?'). This commentator glosses *ūṭṭi* 'feeding ...; fed and ...' as *uṇṇa-p-paṇṇuvittu*.¹⁴ The form *uṇṇa-p-paṇṇuvittu* literally translates as 'making X make Y eat' because *uṇṇa-p-paṇṇu* is already causative/effective, meaning 'make X eat'; the addition of the suffix *vi* adds another degree of causation to it, thus making *uṇṇa-p-paṇṇu-vi* mean 'make X make Y eat'; *uṇṇa-p-paṇṇuvittu* is the adverbial participle form of *uṇṇa-p-paṇṇu-vi*.

both the parties (male and female).'

The commentators' treatment of the word *karpu* reveals to us that the word has a semantic history. This history tells us that the word has suffered a semantic reduction in its life to refer only to 'female profundity/learning' leading to its modern understanding and usage as 'chastity; marital fidelity, especially of a woman.' Semantic shift or change of lexical items is nothing unusual, especially in a culture which is thousands of years old. It may not always be possible to trace the semantic history of lexical items, but ignoring the existence of such history may be detrimental to one's understanding of a people's history in other respects. Therefore, it is the duty of future scholars, especially of cultural historians, to identify, understand, and resolve ambiguities of this kind so that classical Tamil poems and later Tamil works are understood in their proper perspective, and that Tamil culture through Tamil literature is also properly appreciated.

¹³ Cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar's commentary on *matu*:288, 291.

¹⁴ Cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar's commentary on *peru*:479.

An example from another commentary illustrates a style that was apparently influenced by the Sanskrit quotative marker *iti* 'that ...; thus' Notice how the following Tamil sentence ends with the word *āru* 'thus; in that manner', here unnecessary: *tamar uṭaṇ ceṇṇuḷi āñci viṭuttuc cellumātalīṇ avanūrun tōlvi kāṇṭal ilipenpatu koṇṭu ataṇaik kāṇumāru vaitta kūṇṇu enṇravāru*.¹⁵ Here, the reader needs only to know that the form *enṇravāru* means the same as *enṇratu* 'what X said' which is simpler and more akin to classical as well as later Tamil sentence structure.

Revival of the Study of Classical Tamil

As a result of the problems outlined above, there emerged a polarity between classical Tamil poems and their readers in early twentieth century, in spite of the indispensable help provided by the commentators. Nonetheless, the study of these poems continued because of their literary importance.

Fortunately, Western contact with southern India introduced the study of classical Tamil to the Western world and revitalized it in India.¹⁶ Western scholars of the late twentieth century have produced excellent works on classical Tamil, and future scholars will have a tremendous technological advantage not available to medieval and later traditional commentators when they labored over damaged palm-leaf manuscripts to revive these poems.¹⁷ There is then the likelihood that the study of

¹⁵ Pinnattur Narayanasamy Aiyar's Commentary on *narriṇai* 271.

¹⁶ The Tamil world is indebted to outstanding scholars like George L. Hart, John Marr, A.K. Ramanujan, and Kamil Zvelebil, who were pioneers and continue to be instrumental in the study of classical Tamil in the West.

¹⁷ My own research on classical Tamil poetry has been greatly benefited by the unique combination of my traditional Tamil training, Western linguistic training, and modern computing technology.

classical Tamil poetry will take on a new face in the forthcoming centuries, building on the crucial contributions of traditional commentators.¹⁸

The Need for a Systematic Analysis of Tamil

Traditional grammars written in Tamil by Tamils date from the beginning of the Christian era through the twentieth century. Commentaries in Tamil on these grammars are also available beginning ca. the tenth century A.D. Based on a Latin model, Western Missionary grammars of Tamil started to emerge in the sixteenth century, and were written in Portuguese, Dutch, French, Italian, and English. With the introduction of Western education and modern linguistics into the Tamil country in the twentieth century, Tamil scholars wrote descriptions of Tamil in Tamil and English that addressed various issues. Other scholars, from the West and Japan, have also contributed much to the analysis of Tamil. Nevertheless, no systematic, rigorous, and comprehensive analysis of the Tamil language as it developed over time is available.¹⁹

The Project and This Volume

Drawing upon concepts and methods of Western linguistics, I am currently engaged in a systematic study of Tamil literary texts from the

¹⁸ The freer the mind is from later Tamil and non-Dravidian languages, the closer it will get to the Tamil of the classical period.

¹⁹ Zvelebil (1967:8) remarks: "In Tamil, we have nothing to compare with the pioneer work of Gai and Narasimhia in Kannada and Chandra Sekhar in Malayalam. The only possible exception is T.P. Meenakshisundaram's *A History of Tamil Language*, DCPRI, Poona, 1965."

As this volume was nearing completion, I came to know of a description of classical Tamil, entitled *Caṅkattamiḷ*, written in Tamil by S. Agasthialingom in Tamilnadu, India. The complete version of this book is not yet available to me.

earliest period known for Tamil literary documentation (ca. 150 B.C.) up to the sixteenth century A.D., which marks the arrival of the Westerners in the Tamil country. For this ongoing project, Tamil poetry, prose, and inscriptions from the earliest period until the sixteenth century A.D. are being entered into an Apple Macintosh computer. The plan is to create a historical reference grammar of pre-modern Tamil in four sequential volumes; this volume is the first in the series.²⁰

This volume is not intended to discuss the development of grammatical theories in Tamil. A discussion of the development of grammatical theories would involve not only a survey of all literary texts down the centuries, but also of analyses of these texts done at different times by various scholars, Tamil, non-Tamil, ancient, and modern. Such an analysis is not within the scope of this volume.

The present volume is limited to providing a reference tool for understanding the structure of Tamil employed in classical Tamil poetry. This study takes the language of this poetry as a given, and treats it as a benchmark with reference to which the language of subsequent centuries can be described systematically. Distinct changes in the Tamil language surface after the period of this poetry. Slow and steady contact with Indo-Aryan languages over the centuries has introduced several changes in pre-modern Tamil and therefore it would be worthwhile to study the language structure and change over four successive stages of language history: Stage 1 — classical period or the **caṅkam** period (150 B.C.-pre-fifth/sixth century), Stage 2 — post-classical period (pre-seventh century), Stage 3 — medieval period (seventh-twelfth centuries), and Stage 4 — pre-modern period (twelfth-fifteenth centuries).

²⁰ What is here intended by a "reference grammar" is explained later in this chapter under "How to use this volume." See "Methodology" for information on the computing aspect of the project.

The method employed in this volume is essentially synchronic and descriptive. Historical notes about the language are purely incidental. Later volumes will treat the substantial linguistic changes between classical Tamil and the Tamil reflected in later texts. In short, this is a descriptive grammar, not prescriptive. That is to emphasize that it is not responsible for generating and experimenting with hypothetical utterances in Tamil.

The contents of this volume are presented in eight sections. Section 1 contains general information that is assumed in the rest of the volume. Section 2 consists of chapters about nouns, noun-like items, and those items which are added to or derived from nominal stems. Section 3 is about various kinds of verb stems. Section 4 deals with finite verbs and nouns derived from verb stems. Section 5 is devoted to the participles. Section 6 is about the various modes of expression. Section 7 includes information on the verbs *ā* 'to be' and *āṇ* 'to be content', verb modifiers, and figures of speech. The penultimate chapter in this section contains notes on miscellaneous items. The last chapter, "Analysis of A Few Poems," illustrates how different parts of a poem are grammatically connected. Section 8, "Appendix," provides a detailed index of pronouns, case markers, postpositions, particles, and other affixes with reference to their occurrence in the volume.²¹

The chapters in these various sections first give a general description of the given concept, next say how the concept under discussion is linguistically derived, and then provide a variety of examples from classical Tamil poetry.²² The general descriptions of grammatical concepts are

²¹ A glossary of classical Tamil stems is under way. In the meantime the reader is requested to use the following: (i) *The Dravidian Etymological Dictionary* by Burrow and Emeneau and (ii) *The Tamil Lexicon* published by Madras University.

²² In spite of their excellent explanation of rules of grammar, one major inadequacy found in the traditional commentaries on Tamil grammars is that they do not always provide complete reference to the sources of their examples. On many occasions the reader does

brief in many instances. The examples represent all the types and shapes of stems such as nominal, verbal, monosyllabic, non-monosyllabic, vowel-final, and consonant-final. The translations of the examples are deliberately literal and functional, not poetic at all. They may sound odd in some instances for several reasons: the examples had to be pulled out of context; ideas are expressed differently in classical Tamil and in modern English; and more importantly, one has to have at least a minimal understanding of classical Tamil literary conventions to see what they mean. The translations are basically concerned at helping the reader see how exactly the various grammatical forms are used in a poem. In every instance, accuracy is aimed at the particular grammatical form under discussion. The meanings for the words were obtained basically from the context of the poem under consideration and by cross checking their usage in other poems.

How to Use This Volume

One does not have to be a trained linguist or knowledgeable about traditional Tamil grammars in order to use this volume, but it is assumed that the reader has a basic understanding of grammar in a broad sense; that the reader is not puzzled by usages like “case” in a grammatical sense or “clause,” or “participle.” It has also been assumed that the reader has at least a minimal knowledge of Tamil. The information provided about traditional Tamil grammars and commentaries need not distract the readers from their main concern.

This volume is meant to be a “reference tool,” not a text book, and therefore does not guide one to generate Tamil sentences. Nor does it provide declensions of nouns and paradigms of verbs. It is a tool to aid the study of classical Tamil and refers the reader to the various contexts in

not have good examples or does not know their sources.

which given grammatical forms are actually used in a poem. One can use it in two different ways: (i) to use it much like a dictionary where a reader can look up the definition or meaning of an item;²³ (ii) to read through from the beginning and get an introduction to classical Tamil poetry.

For the “dictionary” use of the volume, one has to start with the “Appendix,” which contains lists of items with reference to their occurrence in the volume, and then proceed to specific chapters. Here, a reader could ask what a particular suffix stands for or what the grammatical function of a particular form of a word in classical Tamil is, and so on.

For the “read through” use of the volume, one needs to read all the chapters which provide introductory notes to given grammatical concepts (e.g., “A Note On Participles”) and the discussions under headings such as “General” and “Formation,” but can overlook many examples. Readers have a choice in the last chapter, “Analysis of A Few Poems.” Some very elementary details about classical Tamil poems are provided first in this chapter and may be passed by an experienced reader. Motivated readers may glance through the analysis of the first poem (*aiṅkurunūru* 423), which is quite simple, and may read through the analysis of the second poem (*puṛanānūru* 278), which is slightly complex. The analysis of the last poem (*akanānūru* 9) is intended for patient readers whose attention span will be challenged by the complexity of the poem and its demanding analysis. In each of these three cases, the poem is translated in three ways. A unit-by-unit translation and paraphrase are provided to show how the various words and phrases in the poem are connected. As a treat for the reader, a poetic translation is also provided to demonstrate how the poem is transformed elegantly when it passes through the grammarian’s

²³ Here, the reader must keep in mind that linguistic items normally undergo semantic and functional changes over the centuries and therefore one must not impose modern Tamil usage of an item on its classical Tamil usage.

workshop and rests in a poet's gallery.²⁴

The simplest of the three poems analyzed in the last chapter is given here basically to introduce classical Tamil poetry to the reader. The last chapter contains a detailed grammatical analysis of this poem (*aiṅkuruṇūru* 423).

மாமழை இடியூதத் தளிசொரிந் தன்றே	māmaḷai iṭiyūut taḷicorin taṇṇē
வாணுதல் பசப்பச் செலவயர்ந் தனையே	vāṇutal pacappac celavayarn taṇaiyē
யாமே நிறுறுந் தமையலம்	yāmē niṇṇuran tamaialam
ஆய்மல ருண்கணு நீர்நிறைந் தனவே	āymala ruṇkaṇu nīrnirain taṇavē

Paraphrase from the grammarian's workshop:

*The thundering dark cloud has poured raindrops, indeed —
But you have undertaken a journey as (your lover's) bright forehead
has turned pale (due to the anxiety of separation)
Whereas, we (your lover and I, her female companion) cannot be
calm, separated from you
The seductive eyes (of your lover), which (now) resemble fading
flowers, are filled with tears.*

Transformation in the poet's gallery²⁵:

*Dark clouds,
thundering,
let loose their rain:
her bright forehead has gone pale*

²⁴ The poetic translations are by David D. Shulman, A.K. Ramanujan, and George L. Hart.

²⁵ This translation is by David D. Shulman.

*now that you're to go away.
Still, we haven't deserted you.
No peace for us
any more.
Deadly eyes
fading like flowers.
are flooded with tears.*

METHODOLOGY

The Approach

An account of the process by which this book grew will give the reader some insight into its current form. First, I entered all the anthologies (classical Tamil poems) in modern Tamil script into an Apple Macintosh computer. For example, the first line of *kuruntokai* 2 was entered as follows: கொங்கு தேர் வாழ்க்கை அம் சிறைத் தும்பி. Then I analyzed the poems composed by certain poets, Kautamaṇḍār, Vāṇmikiyār, Mārkaṇṭēyar, and Murañciyūr Muṭinākarāyar.¹ While visually scanning these poems, I noted down grammatical categories like **aḷapeṭai** ‘lengthening of sounds’ and adjectival/relative participle that seemed necessary to explain the formation of classical Tamil words. In selecting these categories, I considered the systems of categorization developed by traditional Tamil grammarians

¹ This choice and subsequent selections of the anthologies were based on Zvelebil’s account of “a relative and absolute chronology” of classical Tamil poetry. See Zvelebil 1975:107.

and Western missionaries who wrote grammars of Tamil during the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries A.D. A blend of these two systems was deemed helpful to explain the basic structure of classical Tamil. Computer software that would efficiently perform the tasks required for the type of analysis needed for this study could not be found — hence, the visual scanning — and, at that time, the experienced human eye, although not perfect, was more useful than the electronic eye in searching for the required items. A computer printout of these poems, however, made the search much easier than it would have been otherwise.²

Next, I analyzed the anthology known as the *patirruppattu* and selected additional grammatical categories as they became necessary. By then, the survey covered the poems up to A.D. 200. At this point it seemed worthwhile to survey all the anthologies, so I started with the anthology *puranānūru* and then moved to other works.

The number of grammatical categories necessary to explain the structure of words and phrases in these poems grew as the number of the anthologies surveyed increased, while the complexity of those categories developed as the search proceeded from anthology to anthology. To be specific, *paripāṭal* and *kalittokai* provided the most elaborate versions of the grammatical categories compared to *kuruntokai* or any other anthology. Thus, the anthologies *in toto* gave a sense of direction and magnitude to the analysis. Hypotheses were formed, then verified or discarded as the survey continued. The verified hypotheses are given in the present volume.

² MicroSoft's Word was sufficient in the early stages of the project to search for required words and phrases. Later, a program in Turbo Pascal was written to retrieve all instances of a required word from all the anthologies.

The Direction

In forming and verifying or discarding the hypotheses, I deliberated over the analyses of classical Tamil done by modern scholars and traditional Tamil grammarians and commentators. In the end, the description that would eventually enable me to explain later developments in the language in terms of classical Tamil seemed to be the most attractive. I have tried also not to make too many assumptions while explaining the grammatical forms.

My approach to the problem differs from that of the traditional commentators basically in terms of its direction. A few examples are given here.³

(a) Traditional commentators on classical Tamil poems tend to explain earlier forms of words which occur in these poems in terms of contemporary forms, naturally. For example, they construe the form **accu** 'fear' as the corrupted form of **accam** and call it **kaṭai-k-kurāi** 'shortening of the final (am).'⁴ Similarly, **ceruki** is said to appear as **ceri** 'inserting, having inserted', **maruvi** is said to occur as **mar** 'joining', **or** 'moving away' is considered to be a "changed form (of **oruvi**)," **tārā** is said to have shortened as **tarā** 'without providing', **kuṭa malai** 'western mountain' is glossed as **kuṭaka malai**, **muḷārai** 'drum-like trunk' is understood as a "changed form (of **muḷāvarai**)" and **taṭai** 'having bent' is explained with reference to **taṭavu** 'bending.'⁵

³ When relevant in this study, I have also pointed out how my approach differs from the analyses done by modern scholars.

⁴ Cf. Parimēlaḷakar's commentary on *pari.3:33* and Saminathier's commentary on *pati.90:2*.

⁵ Cf. Saminathier's commentaries on *kuṟu.92:4*; *72:5*; *pati.13:27*; the Old Commentary on *pati.13:23*; Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar's commentary on *malai.527*; Saminathier's commentary on *pati.pati.5:14*, and Pinnattur Narayanasamy Aiyar's commentary on *naṟr.80:6*.

Most of these forms do occur in classical Tamil: **accu** (*pati.90:2*), **accam** (*kuṟu.392:2*); **cerīi** (*kuṟu.295:1*); **marīi** (*peru:383*), **maruvi** (*matu:541*); **orīi** (*pati.13:27*); **tarā** (*pati.13:23*), **tārā** (*pura.157:3*); **kuṭa** (*malai:527*); **muḷārai** (*pati.pati.5:14*), **muḷāvarai** (*pura.85:7*); **taṭaii** (*narr.80:6*), and **taṭavu** (*peru:77*). **ceruki**, **oruvi**, and **kuṭaka** (*cilap.30:159*) are later forms. However, in each instance, the commentators keep the forms which must have survived in the language of their time as their points of reference in order to explain earlier forms. Thus, they are going backward from a later period toward an earlier one.

The approach of the commentators seems to lack the possibility of inferring how words developed from smaller into larger units. So, wherever possible in this study, I have used the shortest form of the stem without long vowels (e.g., **taṭa** ‘to bend’ instead of **taṭavu** ‘bending’; **muḷa** ‘drum’ instead of **muḷā** ‘drum’) and have also tried to explain all the other forms derived from it. For example, I consider **añcu** ‘to fear’ as the bare verb stem from which the mutated stem **accu** ‘fear’ is derived which subsequently leads to the derivation of the verbal noun **accam** ‘fear’ by adding the suffix **am**. Similarly, I have taken the bare verb stem **kēḷ** ‘to hear, listen’ as the basic form from which the imperative/optative form **kēḷāy** ‘May you listen!’ is derived, whereas Tamil grammars and commentaries derive **kēḷ** from **kēḷāy**.⁶ Similar derivations can be found throughout this study, especially in “Morphophonemics” and “Verbal nouns.”

The approach of starting from a smaller unit and proceeding toward a larger seemed to explain to me why there are two forms for a word to begin with. For example, it can be said that **accu** and **accam** provided the classical Tamil poet with two metrical possibilities. The former (**accu**) yields a certain basic prosodic unit (**nēṟpu acai**) whereas the latter (**accam**) yields a different and larger prosodic unit (**nēṟ-nēṟ**); **muḷārai** is a metrical foot of one pattern (**nīrai-nēṟ**) while **muḷāvarai** is of a different pattern

⁶ See “The Imperative/Optative” in this study.

(**nirai-nirai**). These different forms must have been useful in different meters, allowing for the poet's unrestricted usage of words in the language.

In addition, this approach helped me to see how words must have gotten longer gradually over time by the addition of glides and formative suffixes, since we see glides replacing vowel clusters in later Tamil: e.g., **muḷavarai** < **muḷa** 'drum' + **v** (glide) + **arai** 'trunk'; **kuṭaka** 'western' < **kuṭaku** < **kuṭa** 'west' + **ku** formative suffix.

Furthermore, this approach would encourage future scholars to prepare a lexicon with the shortest attested forms of the stems, which in turn would lead to a better understanding of the language in general and of these poems in particular. Normally and quite understandably, dictionaries that are available to the readers tend to use later forms (usually in their verbal noun structure) for citation purposes, so readers may not be able to see the connection between the dictionary form and the actual form used in poetry, especially the **caṅkam** classics. For example, the word **taṭavu** in modern Tamil means 'caress.' One can imagine the confusion that might arise when the reader has to connect the form **taṭavu** 'caress' from a dictionary to **taṭavu** 'bending' as given in traditional commentaries and subsequently to **taṭa** 'to bend' in classical Tamil. A historical lexicon would be cumbersome if the direction of approach is from **taṭavu** 'caress' going back to **taṭa** 'to bend', but would be greatly appreciated if it gradually traces the semantic connection between **taṭa** 'to bend' and **taṭavu** 'to caress' by moving forward.

(b) Medieval commentators on traditional Tamil grammars tend to consider various suffixes which function alike as derivatives of a single item. For example, Cēṇāvaraiyar considers the adverbial participle suffixes **i** and **y** as derivatives of the adverbial participle suffix **u**. He also considers the infinitive suffixes **ū** and **ā** to be the same.⁷ I have treated these

⁷ Cf. Cēṇāvaraiyar's commentary on Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Rule 228.

suffixes separately so that the readers get a broader view of their usage. Moreover, I consider the *ā* as distinct from *ū*.⁸

The Language of Classical Tamil Poetry and the Approach

The poems surveyed belong to a stage of Tamil which may be termed “old Tamil” or “classical Tamil.” Tamil is normally considered as a language in which the simple sentence has its verb at the end preceded by the object and then the subject occurring at the beginning of the sentence.⁹ This structure is not the norm in classical Tamil poetry. Sentence structure, whether simple or complex, here is greatly controlled by the poetic aspect of the language. Alliteration (*totai* ‘stringing’) seems to play a crucial role in holding the lines in a poem. Therefore, components like the subject, object, and verb occur anywhere in the sentence, depending upon the theme of the poem and what the poet wants to emphasize. For example, in *yāmē niṇ turantu amaiyalam* ‘We cannot be calm, separated from you’ (*aiṅk.423:3*), the subject (*yām* ‘we’) is at the very beginning and the verb (*amaiyalam* ‘we cannot be calm’) is at the end. Now, consider *aḷiyaḷ enṇātu mā maḷai iṇṇum peyya muḷaṅki minnum ... eṇ iṇ uyir kuṟittē* ‘The dark cloud, without thinking that I am to be pitied, aims at my life and roars with lightning in order to rain more’ (*kuṟu.216:5-7*). Here, the subject (*mā maḷai* ‘dark cloud’) is in the middle and the finite verb (*muḷaṅki minnum* ‘roars with lightening’) is also in the middle. Now, consider *tuyil turantaṇavāl tōḷi eṇ kaṇṇē* ‘Friend, my eyes have given up sleep’ (*kuṟu.186:4*). Here, the subject (*kaṇ* ‘eyes’) is at the very end. It happens even if the poem is very long. To have a closer look at a long poem where the subject is at the very end, readers are encouraged

⁸ See “The Non-Past Stem” for examples of *ā* and *ū* used as suffixes. See “A Note on the Verb *ā*” for the significance of *ā* as a separate suffix.

⁹ Linguists would refer to it as an S(ubject) O(bject) V(erb) language.

to glance through the last poem (*akanāṇūru* 9) analyzed in the last chapter. I chose this poem especially for its beauty, depth, and complexity. In this poem which is 26 lines long, there is only one sentence with the finite verb occurring in line 23 and the subject as the very last word in the last line.

While the placement of the subject, object, and verb seems flexible, the order in which affixes are added to a stem is rigid. It can also be said that word order itself is rigid in certain cases: when a nominal marked for the genitive case, an adjective, or an adjectival participle precedes the noun it modifies; when certain verbal participles (adverbial participles and infinitives) precede the main verb in the same clause.¹⁰

Word formation per se, is very much influenced by the metrics of the poems. While the order is rigid with respect to adding suffixes to stems, certain meters (*pā*) like the *ācīriyam* tend to use shorter words and certain other meters like the *kali* tend to employ longer words: e.g., *ṇāyīru* ‘sun’ (*kuṟu.92:1*); *peyarttanen* ‘I moved away’ (*kuṟu.84:1*); *uraikkallātavar* ‘one/those who cannot speak out’ (*kali.61:4*).¹¹ Note that the last is the longest single word found in these poems.

The stage of Tamil in these poems clearly reflects at least four strata, spanning several centuries (ca. 150 B.C. - 500/600 A.D.). In one stratum of the language, nominal or verbal stems without suffixes are used to perform various grammatical tasks. In the next stratum, which might be contemporaneous with the first, “stem mutation” is used as a technique for expressing various grammatical concepts.¹² In the third stratum, which

¹⁰ See “Formation Mechanisms” for understanding the order followed when affixes are added to a stem. See “A Note on Participles” and “Analysis of a Few Poems” for more on word order and how different phrases within a poem are connected.

¹¹ See “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry” for information on the relation between “word” and Tamil metrical syllable (*acai*) and metrical foot (*cīr*).

¹² The term “stem mutation” refers to the changes made in the shape of the stem. This term was adopted from Anttila (1972:153). See “Formation Mechanisms” for examples

might represent a contemporaneous or subsequent stage, numerous affixes appended to nominal and verbal stems are used to perform various grammatical functions.¹³ In the fourth stratum, which might represent the final development of the language of this period, one finds used: (a) more than one affix to denote one grammatical notion and *vice versa*; (b) one derived form to signify more than one grammatical concept; and (c) “periphrasis” to perform various grammatical tasks.¹⁴

Although they provide some insight into a historical dimension of Tamil, these four strata overlap one another greatly, giving way to various metrical patterns of word construction. Based on the structure of the language alone, it seemed impossible to find a unique place for a given poem on the historical scale. Therefore, all the 2,381 poems were telescoped for the purpose of this study as belonging to a single unit of time. I surveyed the poems numerous times in many different ways: in a random order within a given anthology and in ascending and descending orders.¹⁵

It became clear, as the survey proceeded from one poem to another, that the original significance of some linguistic forms had become obscure over time. Then I realized that the object of survey, namely classical Tamil poetry, reflects a language (classical Tamil) which originally developed over many centuries but I am viewing it now after two thousand years through my knowledge of another language (modern Tamil) that is a continuation but not an exact reproduction of its ancestor (classical Tamil).

illustrating stem mutation.

¹³ This technique is referred to as “suffixation” in this study. See “Formation Mechanisms” for examples illustrating suffixation.

¹⁴ (A) and (b) can be referred to as “extension” techniques. The term “extension” is adopted from Anttila (1972:148). “Periphrasis” is a technique by which two or more individually derived forms are used in certain combinations across word boundaries. See “Formation Mechanisms” for examples illustrating extension and periphrasis.

¹⁵ If one or two linguistically significant forms were left out in the process, it must be attributed to human error.

The attempt to explain the characteristics of the object of survey in yet another language, English, which bears a patent genealogical and structural remoteness from the former, added another challenging parameter to the task. Consequently, there arose moments of frustration and the effort to discover the lost original significance of certain linguistic items developed into a competition between frustration, pride, and reality, in which reality won out in the end: as typical of any classical language, a few classical Tamil linguistic forms are and will remain obscure indefinitely.¹⁶ Nevertheless, unparalleled triumphant joy emerged from deciphering what could be deciphered.

¹⁶ As a result, a few items like an, icin, in, and (k)k were safely deposited in a vault of obscurities, but were given contextual labels for practical purposes. They are discussed also in "A Note on Miscellaneous Items."

FORMATION MECHANISMS

GENERAL: The mechanism used to derive a given grammatical form is here called a “formation mechanism.” The grammatical concepts discussed in this study utilize one or more of the following five formation mechanisms: use of the bare stem, stem mutation, suffixation, extension, and periphrasis.¹ A good understanding of these mechanisms is most helpful for understanding the Tamil of this period. The mechanisms are explained in the following paragraphs with some examples. More examples are given in the rest of the volume in various sections.

¹ See “A Note on Stems” in “Morphophonemics.”

The Mechanism of Using the Bare Stem

On many occasions the bare stem, which consists of a nominal or verbal root with or without a formative suffix, expresses a given grammatical concept. For example, one way to express an imperative notion is to use the bare stem:

uva *ini vāli tōli* (aka.65:7)

[**uva** ‘to rejoice’]

‘**Rejoice** now, my friend.’

The Mechanism of Stem Mutation

Certain grammatical forms are derived by “stem mutation.”² For example, the oblique form of a human personal pronoun is obtained by shortening the long vowel in the stem: **tān** ‘he’ > **tan** ‘his.’³ Another type of stem mutation is certain consonantal changes in certain verbs in order to derive the causative/effective form: **tuyil** ‘to sleep’ > **tuyirru** ‘to cause to sleep; make ... sleep.’

The Mechanism of Suffixation

Nominal and verbal roots serve as bases for adding different types of affixes, and the affixes thus added are commonly known as “suffixes.” Those suffixes here are simply referred to as “markers” because they mark grammatical concepts. Information about the various markers that are added to these stems in classical Tamil is provided in the following

² See “Methodology” for the source of the term. For a detailed discussion of stem mutation, see “Morphophonemics.”

³ “Human” personal pronouns are pronouns that refer to human beings. For more information, see “Person-Number-Gender” and “Pronouns.”

few paragraphs with some crucial examples. More examples with translation are provided in various chapters in this study.

Markers that are added directly to a noun-like or **nominal stem** are:

(i) plural marker \pm case marker/postposition

iyaṅkaḷ < iyam + kaḷ (malai:277)

aracarkaḷ < arac(u) + ar + kaḷ (kali.25:3)

makaḷirullum < makaḷ + ir + ullum (pati.31:27)

(ii) **an** or **in**⁴ \pm case marker \pm particle

ataṅāl < atu + an + āl (mull:17)

kaṇṇiṅāl < kaṇ + in + āl (kali.108:28)

paraṅkuṇṇiṅkum < paraṅkuṇṇu + in + ku + um (pari.17:43)

(iii) case marker \pm particle

avara < avar + a (puṛa.15:9)

vayiṅāṇē < vayiṅ + āṇ + ē (pati.36:1)

(iv) particle

cuṇṇamum < cuṇṇam + um (aka.17:6)

(v) PNG marker, occasionally preceded by **an**, **ā(t)**, **āl**, **i**, **in**, and/or a glide (**ñ**, **n**, **y**, or **v**), to derive an adjectival/appellative noun

kāla < kāl + a (pari.20:9)

kālaṇa < kāl + an + a (kuru.7:1)

iṇṇātu < in + ā(t) + tu (kuru.245:2)

iṇṇātana < in + āt + an + a (kuru.309:7)

cākāṭṭālar < cākātu + āl + ar (pati.27:14)

iṇiya < in + i + glide y + a (kali.53:12)

⁴ The **an** and **in** are considered as **cāriyai** “augments or inflectional increments” in the tradition. For more information, see “A Note on Miscellaneous Items.”

eruttiṇa < eruttu + iṇ + a	(puṛa.387:7)
valaiñar < valai + ñ + ar	(peru.274)
viṇainar < viṇai + n + ar	(pati.62:16)
maṭava < maṭa + glide v + a	(kuru.66:1)

- (vi) āy to an adjectival noun or a verbal noun for deriving an adverbial form

iyalpiṛṛāy < iyalpiṛru + āy	(pari.7:48)
īraicciyāy < īraicci + glide y + āy	(kali.8:9)

- (vii) āṇ or iṇ to a verbal noun ending with al, āl, kal, tal, or mai for deriving a causal form meaning ‘since’

oḷukalāṇ < oḷukal + āṇ	(kali.39:14)
uṇmaiyaṇ < uṇmai + glide y + āṇ	(puṛa.182:9)
teṛutaliṇ < teṛutal + iṇ	(aka.1:10)

- (viii) i to an adjectival stem or iṇ to an adjectival noun for deriving an adverbial form

naṇi < naṇ + i	(kuri.33)
nuṇṇitiṇ < nuṇṇitu + iṇ	(neṭu.76)

- (ix) il/iṇ(um) to a nominative or oblique stem for deriving a comparative form

pitirvil < pitirvu + il	(aka.1:18)
urumiṇ < urum + iṇ	(puṛa.366:3)
kūṭiṇum < kūṭu + iṇ + um	(kuru.374:7)
itaṇiṇ < itaṇ + iṇ	(narṛ.322:2)

- (x) um to an adjectival noun for deriving an adverbial form

peritum < peritu + um	(aka.59:2)
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- (xi) eṇ to an imitative word; eṇa to an adjectival stem for deriving an imitative word functioning like an adverb

īlumen cummai < īlum + eṇ cummai	(poru.65)
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melleṇa < mel + eṇa (aka.49:7)

- (xii) **ku** to an adjectival stem for deriving an adverbial form; to a nominative stem for deriving a comparative form

naṇku < nal + ku (matu.82)

vāliyōṛku < vāliyōṇ + ku (pari.2:21)

Markers that can be added directly to a **bare verb stem** are:

- (i) causative/transitive marker **tt**, **(p)pi**, or **vi**

naṭatta < naṭa + tt + a (pari.10:43)

pacappittōr < paca + ppi + tt + ōr (aiṅk.67:5)

koṭpittāṇ < koḷ + pi + tt + āṇ (kali.145:57)

arukuvittu < aruku + vi + tt + u (kali.142:2)

- (ii) PNG marker to derive a non-past personal verb or a negative personal verb

uḷeṇ < uḷ + eṇ (kuṛu.310:5)

ilaṇ < il + aṇ (aka.147:14)

māṭṭēṇ < māṭṭu + ēṇ (narr.342:3)

- (iii) PNG marker to derive a non-past participial noun or a negative participial noun

vallar < val + ar (puṛa.27:18)

cārāṇ < cār + āṇ (kali.38:19)

- (iv) negative **al** before the PNG marker to derive negative personal verbs and negative participial nouns; before the imperative/optative markers **ka** and **min** to derive negative imperatives

vēṇṭalam < vēṇṭu + al + am (puṛa.205:2)

poruntalar < poruntu + al + ar (aka.266:12)

vāraṇka < vār (*var) + al + ka (aka.40:12)

koḷḷaṇmin < koḷ + al + min (puṛa.216:5)

- (v) **ā** to derive a negative adjectival participle or a negative adverbial participle; **ā** to precede the marker **mal** or **mai** for deriving negative adverbial participles or to precede the marker **mai** for deriving a negative verbal noun

kalaṅkā < kalaṅku + ā	(<i>puṛa.230:4</i>)
aṛiyā < aṛi + glide y + ā	(<i>narr.275:4</i>)
toypatāmal < toypatu + ā + mal	(<i>malai:365</i>)
vaḷāamai < vaḷu + ā(a) + mai	(<i>kali.2:17</i>)
aṛiyāmai < aṛi + glide y + ā + mai	(<i>pati.15:14</i>)

- (vi) **āt** before the addition of a participial noun marker, adjectival participle marker **a**, adverbial participle marker **u**, or negative imperative/optative markers **i**, **mē**, and **mō**. These are negative forms.

uṇarātōr < uṇar + āt + ōr	(<i>pati.51:24</i>)
aṛiyāta < aṛi + glide y + āt + a	(<i>kali.30:7</i>)
āṇātu < āṇ + āt + u	(<i>pati.21:11</i>)
cūḷātē < cūḷ + āt + u/ē	(<i>kali.6:8</i>)
varuntāti < varuntu + āt + i	(<i>kali.107:30</i>)
ceppātīmē < ceppu + āt + ī + mē	(<i>aka.52:15</i>)
aḷātīmō < aḷu + āt + ī + mō	(<i>narr.13:2</i>)

- (vii) negative **il** before an imperative marker to derive a negative imperative

kāṇiliyarō < kāṇ + il + iyarō	(<i>pati.44:8</i>)
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- (viii) **ēl** before the imperative marker **ka** to derive a negative imperative

cēṛēṛka < ceṛu + ēl + ka	(<i>pari.20:68</i>)
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- (ix) verbal noun marker

keṭal < keṭu + al	(<i>puṛa.366:17</i>)
iṇmai < il + mai	(<i>pati.68:15</i>)

- (x) past/completive or non-past/non-completive marker which may be followed by certain other markers

cīi < cī + i	(kali.101:8)
vēṭṭēm < vēḷ + tt + ēm	(aink.6:6)
āṇṭu < āḷ + t + u	(pura.201:10)
pulittāṇa < puli + tt + aṇ + a	(aka.394:1)
porutu < poru + t + u	(kuri:135)
karintu < kari + nt + u	(aka.169:1)
pukaṇṇu < pukal + t + u	(tiru:67)
irakkum < ira + kk + um	(pura.180:11)
kāṇkam < kāṇ + k + am	(naṇṇ.81:9)
eṇiṇar < eṇi + ñ + ar	(aka.71:12)
pulatti < pula + tt + i	(aka.39:25)
eṇṇutir < eṇṇu + t + ir	(aka.5:16)
piṇaḷna < piṇaḷ + n + a	(pati.13:1)
uraippal < urai + pp + al	(aka.28:2)
kāṇpal < kāṇ + p + al	(pati.77:12)
eṇmaṇār < eṇ + m + aṇ + ār	(kali.119:16)
vāḷval < vāḷ + v + al	(pura.245:7)

- (xi) **um** or **ūu** to derive a non-past adjectival participle; **ūu** for deriving an infinitive

īyum < ī + glide y + um	(pura.22:33)
etirkolḷūu < etirkol + ūu	(kali.146:38)
kāṇūu < kāṇ + ūu	(kuri:230)

- (xii) infinitive marker

cuṇṇa < cuṇṇu + a	(malai:46)
maṇaiyā < maṇai + glide y + ā	(malai:210)
pēṇiyar < pēṇ + iyar	(pati.21:5)
kāṇūu < kāṇ + ūu	(kuri:230)
taṇimār < taṇi + mār	(malai:303)

- (xiii) **iṇ** for deriving a conditional
 tuñciṇ < tuñcu + iṇ (aka.122:5)
- (xiv) **āṇum** (*āyiṇum) to derive a concessive of fact (“although”);
iṇum to derive a concessive of fact or a concessive of supposition
 (“even if”)
 eṇṇāṇum < eṇ + āṇum (kali.140:13)
 collīṇum < col + iṇum (kuru.306:2)
 peyariṇum < peyar + iṇum (pura.3:14)
- (xv) imperative/optative marker, positive or negative
 ciṛakka < ciṛa + kka (matu:194)
 uṇmiṇ < uṇ + miṇ (pati.18:1)
 peyaraḷ < peyar + aḷ (pura.3:14)

Markers which can be added directly to the **past stem** of a verb are:

- (i) PNG marker which may be preceded by **aṇ**, **iciṇ**, or **iṇ** for deriving a past personal verb
 ceyta < ceyt + a (aink.143:3)
 kaṭintaṇam < kaṭint + aṇ + am (aka.5:26)
 ceṇṇiciṇōṇ < ceṇṇ + iciṇ + ōṇ (narr.300:6)
 curukkiṇem < curukki + iṇ + em (pura.206:10)
- (ii) PNG marker which may be preceded by **aṇ**, **iciṇ**, or **iṇ** for deriving a past participial noun
 nalkūrtār < nalkūrt + āṛ (kali.50:14)
 māṇṭaṇa < māṇṭ + aṇ + a (pati.19:27)
 paṭaittiṇōṛ < paṭaitt + iciṇ + ōṛ (pura.18:23)
 vēṇṭiṇar < vēṇṭi + iṇ + ar (peru:444)
- (iii) negative **il** before the addition of a PNG marker for deriving a negative personal verb or negative participial noun

- melintilaḷ < melint + il + aḷ (kuṛu.182:7)
 āyvantilār < āyvant + il + ār (pari.9:25)
- (iv) verbal noun marker
 nekiḷntatai < nekiḷnt + atai (kali.132:15)
- (v) past/completive adjectival participle marker **a** which is occasionally preceded by **iṇ**
 tokutta < tokutt + a (kuṛu.372:2)
 tuvariṇa < tuvari + iṇ + a (aka.243:1)
- (vi) adverbial participle marker **i** or **u**
 vīci < vīcu/vīci + i (matu:752)
 toḷutu < toḷut + u (poru:150)
- (vii) **āl** which may be preceded by **iṇ** to derive a conditional; and **ēl** for deriving a conditional
 kaṇṭāl < kaṇṭ + āl (puṛa.390:25)
 āṇāl < *āyiṇ + āl (kali.108:9)
 uṇṭēl < uṇṭ + ēl (kali.38:13)
- (viii) the comparative **aṇṇa** or **eṇṇa** ‘like’, the quotative **eṇa** ‘thus, that, so that’, some nouns, the particle **āṇku** ‘thus, in that manner’, and the postposition **uḷi** ‘when, at the time’
 eḷutiyaṇṇa < eḷuti + glide y + aṇṇa (aka.297:13)
 vaṭittanaṇṇa < vaṭitt + aṇṇa (aka.172:6)
 kāṇṇaṇṇa < kāṇṇ + aṇṇa (malai:498)
 māytteṇa < māytt + eṇa (aka.297:6)
 eṭuttēru < eṭutt + ēru (pati.41:23)
 niṇṇāṇku < niṇṇ + āṇku (puṛa.35:18)
 ceṇṇuḷi < ceṇṇ + uḷi (aka.48:6)
- (ix) **um** to provide the sense ‘although’
 kaṇṭum < kaṇṭ + um (puṛa.173:9)

anriyum < anri + glide y + um (malai:134)

Markers which are added directly to the **non-past stem** of a verb are:

- (i) PNG marker, which may be preceded by **an**, for deriving a non-past personal verb

uḷa < uḷ + a (kali.117:8)
 civakkum < civakk + um (kuṟu.354:1)
 uraippal < uraipp + al (aka.28:2)
 takaippaṇa < takaipp + an + a (kali.3:17)
 kāṇpar < kāṇp + ar (kali.110:22)
 eṇmaṇār < eṇm + an + ār (kali.119:16)

- (ii) PNG marker which may be preceded by **āl** or **an** for deriving a non-past participial noun

piṛaḷna < piṛaḷn + a (pati.13:1)
 aṛiyāḷar < aṛi + glide y + āl + ar (puṛa.393:4)
 koḷvaṇa < koḷv + an + a (kali.82:19)

- (iii) negative **al** to a non-past stem ending with **(k)k** and following it with a PNG marker or an imperative/optative marker; **al** to a non-past stem ending with **(k)k** and following it with **āt** and a PNG marker or adjectival participle marker

tīrkkalār < tīrkk + al + ār (kali.140:17)
 tarukallāy < taruk + al + āy (kali.148:17)
 aṛikallāy < aṛik + al + āy (kali.95:26)
 toḷukallīr < toḷuk + al + īr (pari.15:34)
 uraikkallātavar < uraikk + al + āt + avar (kali.61:14)
 kaḷikallāta < kaḷik + al + āt + a (kali.20:21)

- (iv) verbal noun marker

kiḷippatu < kiḷipp + atu (aka.72:1)

- (v) non-past adjectival participle marker **a** to a periphrastic non-past stem; non-past adjectival participle marker **um** to a non-past stem ending with **(k)k** or **pp**

cērkiṇra < cērkiṇ + a	(<i>pari.22:35</i>)
karikkum < karikk + um	(<i>kuṟu.363:2</i>)
eṭuppum < eṭupp + um	(<i>kuṟu.398:5</i>)

- (vi) **a**, **āṇ**, or **u** to a non-past stem that ends with **(k)k**, **t**, **(p)p**, or **v** for deriving an infinitive

maṟakka < maṟakk + a	(<i>aiṅk.470:5</i>)
pukuta < pukut + a	(<i>pari.22:11</i>)
maṟappa < maṟapp + a	(<i>puṟa.68:19</i>)
kāṇpāṇ < kāṇp + āṇ	(<i>kali.97:7</i>)
kuḷaivāṇ < kuḷaiv + āṇ	(<i>narr.229:9</i>)
niṇaipu < niṇaip + u	(<i>narr.208:4</i>)

- (vii) **il/iṇ** to a non-past stem ending with **(k)k** or **(p)p** for deriving a conditional

kaḷikkil < kaḷikk + il	(<i>aiṅk.415:3</i>)
kēṭkiṇ < kēṭk + iṇ	(<i>aiṅk.81:5</i>)
kēṭpiṇ < kēṭp + iṇ	(<i>aka.98:28</i>)

- (viii) the comparative **anna** ‘like’, some nouns, and the postpositions **aḷavai** ‘measure, limit’ and **uḷi** ‘when, at the time’ to a non-past stem ending with **(p)p** or **v**

kāṇpaṇṇa < kāṇp + aṇṇa	(<i>puṟa.211:3</i>)
peyviṭam < peyv + iṭam	(<i>puṟa.173:5</i>)
muyalvaḷavai < muyalv + aḷavai	(<i>aka.189:10</i>)
kēṭpuḷi < kēṭp + uḷi	(<i>kali.146:30</i>)

- (ix) **iṇum** to a non-past stem ending with **(k)k** or **(p)p** to provide the senses ‘even if’ and ‘although’

ākinum < āk + inum

(*pura.216:3*)

aḷippinum < aḷipp + inum

(*narr.35:9*)

(In fact, the past/completive stem and the non-past/non-completive stem can be taken as the basic derived forms of the classical Tamil verb; other verb forms and certain types of nouns can be further derived from these stems.)

The Mechanism of Extension

The extended use of a suffix or a derived form to denote more than one grammatical concept is the mechanism of “extension.”⁵ An example is: **tirattal** (*pura.44:11, 12*). As an affirmative imperative/optative, this form (< **tira** ‘to open’ + **ttal** suffix) means ‘Open!’, whereas as an affirmative verbal noun it refers to “opening” as an action/process. Here, the form **tirattal** has an extended usage.

The Mechanism of Periphrasis

In some cases, the grammatical concept spreads across words. For example, one way to express the concept of an affirmative imperative/optative is to use a verbal noun that ends with **al** or **(t)tal** followed by **vēṇṭum** ‘is necessary’: e.g., āṅku p **peyartal vēṇṭum** ‘(You) must go there’ (*aka.10:8*). Here, the combination of **peyartal** ‘moving’ (< **peyar** ‘to move’ + **tal**) and **vēṇṭum** ‘is necessary’ provides the imperative/optative sense ‘must move.’

⁵ See “Methodology” for the source of the term.

PHONOLOGY¹

GENERAL: Classical Tamil reflects a phonological system that contains significant contrasts absent in many non-Indic languages. Most striking among these are the contrast between long and short vowels and the contrast between retroflex consonants and non-retroflex consonants. Another important feature that distinguishes classical Tamil from many other languages is that it does not contain aspirated sounds. The existence of an alveolar stop (ஞ) sets classical Tamil apart even from modern Tamil, in which the old alveolar stop has become an alveolar trill.

Tamil Letters (**eḷuttu**)

The term **eḷuttu** “letters” is the generic term that refers to Tamil speech sounds. In the tradition, the **eḷuttu** are categorized basically as

¹ The statements in this chapter are based on a survey of classical Tamil poetry as well as the Tolkāppiyam and its commentaries. For a succinct description of the Tolkāppiyam, see Ramanujan (1985:302). See Zvelebil (1973:131-154) for detailed information on it.

iyarkai eḷuttu “natural/spontaneous letters” and **cārpū eḷuttu** “dependent letters.”² The natural letters (**iyarkai eḷuttu**) are of two types: vowels (**uyir eḷuttu**) and consonants (**mey eḷuttu**). The dependent letters (**cārpū eḷuttu**) are extra-short **i**, extra-short **u**, and the **āytam** which is represented in this study as **ḥ**.

Two more terms, **uyirmey** and **orru**, referring to these letters are used in the tradition: **uyirmey**, which can be understood as a “vowelled consonant,” is a conglomerate of a vowel (**uyir**) and a consonant (**mey**): e.g., **ka** which is the conglomerate of the consonant **k** and the vowel **a** (க < க + அ). **orru** is a “vowelless consonant,” a consonant that is not combined with a vowel: e.g., **k** which is just the consonant **k** (க).

The Term **eḷuttu** and Syllable

A **uyir eḷuttu** (vowel) or a **uyirmey eḷuttu** (vowelled consonant) optionally followed by one or two **orru** (vowelless consonant) is the equivalent of what is normally understood as a syllable, here marked in bold type: e.g., **அ** (**a**), **ஆர்** (**ār** ‘to be full’), **ஆர்த்து** (**ārttu** ‘having filled’), **க** (**ka**), **கல்** (**kal** ‘stone’), **போன்ம்** (**pōnm** ‘it seems like’), **மலை** (**malai** ‘mountain’).

Natural Letters (**iyarkai eḷuttu**)

These are actually better understood as “primary letters” (**mutal eḷuttu**). Vowels and consonants comprise this group. In the tradition, length/duration is the basis for categorizing the vowels while the manner of articulation is the basis for categorizing the consonants. Duration is discussed below. The twelve vowels (**a**, **ā**, **i**, **ī**, **u**, **ū**, **e**, **ē**, **ai**, **o**, **ō**, and **au**)

² Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rule 7.

are divided into short vowels (**kurreluttu** or **kuṛil**: **a**, **i**, **u**, **e**, and **o**), long vowels (**neṭṭeluttu** or **neṭil**: **ā**, **ī**, **ū**, **ē**, **ai**, **ō**, and **au**), and elongated vowels (**uyir aḷapeṭai**: **āa**, **īi**, **ūu**, **ēe**, **aii**, **ōo**, and **auu**).³ The eighteen consonants (**k**, **ṇ**, **c**, **ñ**, **ṭ**, **ṇ**, **t**, **n**, **p**, **m**, **y**, **r**, **l**, **v**, **ḷ**, **ḷ**, **ṛ**, and **ṇ**) are divided into “hard class” (**val inam**: **k**, **c**, **ṭ**, **t**, **p**, and **r**), “soft class” (**mel inam**: **ṇ**, **ñ**, **ṇ**, **n**, **m**, and **ṇ**), and “middle class” (**iṭai inam**: **y**, **r**, **l**, **v**, **ḷ**, and **ḷ**).⁴ Certain consonants are elongated in some contexts and called “elongated consonants” (**orru aḷapeṭai**: **ṇṇ**, **ññ**, **ṇṇ**, **nn**, **mm**, **yy**, **ll**, **v v**, **ḷḷ**, **nn**, and **ḷḷ**).

Vowels (uyir ‘life-breath’)

Each long vowel is associated with a short vowel. The long vowel **ā** has **a** as its shorter counterpart, similarly **ī** has **i**, **ū** has **u**, **ē** has **e**, **ai** has **i**, **ō** has **o**, and **au** has **u**. In orthography, each of these short and long vowels is represented by a distinct letter. These vowels along with their equivalents in modern Tamil script are as follows⁵:

³ Some might hold that old Tamil contains five short vowels (**a**, **i**, **u**, **e**, and **o**), five long vowels (**ā**, **ī**, **ū**, **ē**, and **ō**), and two diphthongs (**ai** and **au**).

The Tolkāppiyam groups **ai** and **au** with long vowels and equates the combination of **a** and **i** to **ai**, the combination of **a** and **u** to **au**. See Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rules 4, 54, and 55.

See Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam:6. Also see “Juxtaposed Vowels” later in this chapter and “Lengthening of Sounds (aḷapeṭai) and Vowel Clusters” in this study.

⁴ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rules 35 and 37.

⁵ Modern Tamil script is used here for two reasons. The poems surveyed for this study are available in modern Tamil script, and the readers of this volume are more likely to be familiar with modern Tamil script than with archaic scripts. For a discussion of old Tamil script, see Zvelebil (1975:17-18).

		Front	Central	Back
High	short	i இ		u உ
	long	ī ி		ū ஁
	short	e ஏ		o ஒ
Mid	long	ē ஏ		ō ஔ
	short		a அ	
	long		ā ஆ	
Low				
	long			

Other vowels: ai ஐ and au ஔ.

Consonants (mey ‘body’)

In orthography, each of the eighteen consonants is represented by a distinct letter. These consonants along with their equivalents in modern Tamil script are as follows:

	Stops (“hard class”)	Nasals (“soft class”)	Liquids, Semi-Vowels (“middle class”)
Velar	k க	ṅ ங	ḡ ஃ
Palatal	c ச	ñ ஞ	y ய
Retroflex	ṭ ட	ṇ ண	
Alveolar	r ர	n ன	r ர், l ற் ⁶
Dental	t த	n ந	l ல், l ள் ⁶
Bi-labial	p ப	m ம	
Labio-dental			v வ

⁶ Here l ல் and l ள் are classified as “dentals” on the basis of the articulatory effort (“muyarci”) involved in producing them as described in Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rule 96.

The āytam (ḥ)

The **āytam**, literally meaning ‘instrument/weapon’, is the name of a Tamil speech sound represented in modern Tamil script as ஃ. In poetry, it is treated like a vowelless consonant. As mentioned earlier, it is represented as **ḥ** in this study. In modern Tamil, the pronunciation of this letter is similar to the sound **h** in English, for example, in a word like “hen.” From the modern pronunciation of the **āytam** one can describe it as a “voiceless velar fricative.”

The **āytam** occurs in two contexts. One is in the middle of a word where it is preceded by a short vowel and followed by a consonant from the hard class (e.g., **eḥku** ‘spear, wrought iron’). The other context for the **āytam** is morphophonemic. When a monosyllabic word containing a short vowel and ending with **l** or **ḷ** is followed by a word beginning with the dental consonant **t**, the **l** and **ḷ** change to the **āytam** while the dental **t** following the **l** changes to **r** and the **t** following the **ḷ** changes to **ṭ** (e.g., **pal** ‘many’ + **tuḷi** ‘drops’ > **paḥṛuḷi** ‘many drops’; **kaḷ** ‘toddy’ + **tu PNG** > **kaḥṭu**).

The **āytam** occurs infrequently in old Tamil and its occurrence is rarer in modern Tamil.⁷ **aḥku** ‘to shrink’, **aḥtu** ‘that one’, **Aḥtai** (a person’s name), **iḥtu** ‘this one’, **eḥkam** ‘spear’, **eḥku** ‘spear’, **kaḥṭu** ‘(sediment of) toddy’, **paḥṛi** ‘boar’, **Paḥṛuḷi** (name of a river), and **veḥku** ‘to desire’ are a few words which contain the **āytam** in old Tamil.

Dependent letters (cārupu eḷuttu)

A certain variety of two vowels and one consonant are perceived as dependent letters: extra-short **i**, extra-short **u**, and **āytam** (**ḥ**). They are

⁷ Extensive modern literature on the **āytam** is available. For further information, see Balasubramanian (1976:561-582).

known as “dependent letters” (**cāṛpu eḷuttu**) in the tradition because of several reasons. They are variants or derivatives of some other letters (**eḷuttu**) or are often elided. In the case of the **āytam**, there is one more reason — unlike other vowelless consonants, it never allows a vowel to be joined to it.

The extra-short **u** (**kurṛiyal ukaram**) is a variant of the regular short **u**. It occurs at the end of a word preceded by a hard consonant (**k**, **c**, **ṭ**, **t**, **p**, or **r**) which in turn is preceded by a long vowel or yet another consonant (e.g., **kācu** ‘coin’; **kāṭṭu** ‘to show’; **teḷku**, name of an insect). It is not a stable letter. It is deleted when followed by an item beginning with a vowel. If this short **u** is preceded by a soft consonant (**ñ**, **ṇ**, **n**, **m**, or **ṇ**) or a middle consonant (**y**, **r**, **l**, **v**, **ḷ**, or **ḷ**), then it is no longer referred to as **kurṛiyal ukaram**, but receives the name **murṛiyal ukaram**. The **murṛiyal ukaram** is not really different from the regular short **u** and is also not considered as a dependent letter. Except on one occasion, that is in the initial syllable of the word **nuntai** ‘your father’, the **murṛiyal ukaram** always occurs at the end of a word.

The extra-short **i** (**kurṛiyal ikaram**) is a derivative of the extra-short **u** and therefore a dependent letter. It is always followed by **y** and is a morphophonemic product; that is to say that it occurs as a result of combining two items. When an extra-short **u** (**kurṛiyal ukaram**) is followed by a word beginning with **y**, it changes to **i** which happens to be shorter than the regular short vowel **i** and therefore is called the extra-short **i** (**kurṛiyal ikaram**: **nāku** ‘young cow’ + **yātu** ‘which one?’ > **nākiyātu**). There is one more context where the extra-short **i** is supposed to occur — when the imperative suffix **miyā** is added to a stem ending with **l** or **ḷ**, the

short **i** in **miyā** is shortened further and called the extra-short **i** (cel ‘to go’ + **miyā** > **ceṇmiyā** ‘Go!’; **kēḷ** ‘to hear, listen’ + **miyā** > **kēṇmiyā** ‘Listen!’).⁸ Note that this suffix **miyā** is not attested in classical Tamil poetry.

Other Letters Which are Shortened: Besides the short **i** and short **u**, there are certain other letters which are shortened in certain contexts. Note that these particular letters are not called “dependent letters.” Apparently, the vowels **ai** and **au**, which are normally long, are shortened in two contexts: (a) when not used in isolation for citation purposes; (b) when not elongated (so as to result in **aii** and **auu**). This process of shortening is known as **kuṟukkam** ‘shortening’ and the shortened vowels are referred to by the terms **aikāra-k-kuṟukkam** and **aukāra-k-kuṟukkam** respectively. Another letter which is shortened in certain contexts is the consonant **m** and the process is known as the **makara-k-kuṟukkam** ‘shortening of m.’ The consonant **m** is shortened in two contexts: (a) when preceded by **ṇ** or **ṇ** within a word; (b) when occurring at the end of a word and is followed by the consonant **v** which begins the next word.⁹

Lengths of Letters (**māttirai**)

The term **māttirai** refers to the duration/length of the **eḷuttu** discussed above. In the tradition, vowels and consonants are considered to have intrinsic length. One unit measure of length (**māttirai**) is equal to a snap of the fingers or a wink of the eyes.¹⁰ Consonants measure one-half unit in length, while short and long vowels measure one and two units respectively.¹¹ Elongated vowels (**uyir aḷapeṭai**: **āa**, **īi**, **ūu**, **ēe**, **aii**, **ōo**, and **auu**) have three unit measures of length. When a consonant is elongated

⁸ Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 34.

⁹ See Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rules 11 and 13, for details and examples.

(**orru alapeṭai**: **ṇṇ**, **ṇṇ** etc.), it is considered as having one unit measure of length.¹² Each one of the dependent letters (extra-short **i**, extra-short **u**, and **āytam**) has one half unit measure of length.

The shortened **ai** and **au** have one unit measure of length each. The shortened **m** has one quarter of a unit measure of length.

Alphabetical Ordering of Vowels and Consonants

The alphabetical ordering of old Tamil vowels and consonants is not easy to reconstruct. Two systems can be discerned.

1. The following order is based on the introductory rules in the *Tolkāppiyam*¹³:

a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, e, ē, ai, o, ō, au, k, ṇ, c, ñ, t, ṇ, t, n, p, m, y, r, l, v, l, l, r, ṇ, and ḥ.

அ, ஆ, இ, ஈ, உ, ஊ, எ, ஏ, ஐ, ஒ, ஓ, ஒள, க், ங், ச், ஞ், ட், ண், த், ந், ப், ம், ய், ர், ல், வ், ழ், ள், ற், ன், ஃ

¹⁰ *Tolkāppiyam*, *eḷuttatikāram*, *ḷampūraṇam*, Rule 7.

¹¹ *Tolkāppiyam*, *eḷuttatikāram*, *ḷampūraṇam*, Rules 3 and 4.

¹² See “Lengthening of Vowels (**alapeṭai**) and Vowel Clusters” for more on elongation of vowels and consonants.

¹³ The convention followed in modern Tamil is almost the same. The *Tolkāppiyam* does not provide an alphabetical ordering of Tamil vowels and consonants. One can infer from a few rules in it that:

(a) the vowel **a** அ begins the alphabet series and the consonant **ṇ** ண completes it;

(b) **au** is the last in the series of the vowels and **ṇ** is the last in the series of the consonants. The alphabetical order of the **āytam** (ஃ) is not clear. I have placed it at the end because *Tolkāppiyam* introduces it as a “dependent letter.” In modern Tamil, the **āytam** is placed at the end of the vowels.

See *Tolkāppiyam*, *eḷuttatikāram*, *ḷampūraṇam*, Rules 1, 2, 8, and 9.

2. The following order is based on the order in which the Tolkāppiyam discusses their manner of articulation:¹⁴

a, ā, i, ī, e, ē, ai, u, ū, o, ō, au, k, ṅ, c, ṇ, t, n, r, ṇ, r, l, l, l, p, m, v, y, and ḥ.

அ, ஆ, இ, ஈ, எ, ஏ, ஐ, உ, ஊ, ஒ, ஓ, ஔ, க, ங, ச, ஞ, ட, ண, த, ந, ற, ன, ர, ழ, ல, ள, ப, ம, வ, ய, ஃ

Distribution of Vowels and Consonants

Distribution of vowels: In classical Tamil poetry, any of the twelve vowels occurs in word-initial position. In word-medial position, vowels are joined to the consonants preceding them orthographically. Technically, any vowel can occur in word-final position.¹⁵ However, the short vowels **e** and **o** have a restricted occurrence in the sense that they are in word-final position in only a few roots (e.g., **ce** ‘red’, **no** ‘to suffer’) and are theoretically allowed in word-final position if they follow their respective longer counterparts, the long **ē** and the long **ō**. And they do occur in classical Tamil poetry when **ē** and **ō** are elongated: **ēē y ōō eṇa viḷi ērpikka** ‘as she called out **ēē** and **ōō**’ (*pari.19:61*).

Juxtaposed vowels: Juxtaposed vowels (vowels that occur in adjacent positions either within a word or across words) are found in classical Tamil. Sometimes, a long vowel is elongated beyond its intrinsic length for metrical purposes. The elongation is indicated orthographically by adding the long vowel’s shorter counterpart once or twice after the long vowel. No glide is inserted between the juxtaposed vowels formed in this manner. This process is prosodic and known as **aḷapeṭai** (“elongation”).¹⁶

¹⁴ See Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rules 85-91, 93-99, and 101.

¹⁵ See Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rules 69 and 70.

¹⁶ See “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry” and “Lengthening of Sounds (**aḷapeṭai**) and

Juxtaposed vowels occur sometimes during a morphological process also. That is, a vowel cluster emerges between a stem and the item following it in certain situations. No glide is inserted between the juxtaposed vowels formed in this manner. Although this is not always a true **a|apeṭai** process (elongation), the vowel cluster resulting from this process resembles an elongated vowel orthographically.¹⁷

Distribution of consonants: The consonants **k, c, ñ, t, n, p, m, y,** and **v** occur in word-initial position and are joined to the vowels following them orthographically.¹⁸ In word-medial position also, consonants are joined to the vowels following them. The only consonant which does not occur between two vowels is **ñ**. The consonants which occur in word-final position are **ṇ, m, y, r, l, ḷ, ḷ̣,** and **ṇ**.¹⁹

Vowel Clusters” for details and examples.

¹⁷ For more information, see “Lengthening of Sounds (**a|apeṭai**) and Vowel Clusters.”

¹⁸	kaṇ	கண் ‘eye’	(<i>kurū.5:5</i>)
	cilai	சிலை ‘bow’	(<i>malai:406</i>)
	ñāṇrai	ஞானறை ‘at the time of’	(<i>narr.287:7</i>)
	tūvi	துவி ‘feather/down’	(<i>neṭu:132</i>)
	ñi	நீல் ‘blue’	(<i>narr.382:2</i>)
	pēṇa	பேண் ‘to cherish’	(<i>pari.8:126</i>)
	muḷavu	முழவு ‘drum’	(<i>aka.172:11</i>)
	yāṭu	யாடு ‘goat’	(<i>pati.78:13</i>)
	viḷai	விளை ‘to grow/mature’	(<i>pati.60:6</i>)
	pūṇ	பூண் ‘to wear’	(<i>puṇa.166:12</i>)
¹⁹	maram	மரம் ‘tree’	(<i>puṇa.349:6</i>)
	toy	தொய் ‘to sag’	(<i>malai:365</i>)
	cuvar	சுவர் ‘wall’	(<i>puṇa.211:19</i>)
	tol	தொல் ‘old/ancient’	(<i>puṇa.211:19</i>)
	yāl	யாழ் ‘harp’	(<i>puṇa.242:2</i>)
	uḷ	உள் ‘inside; heart’	(<i>aka.32:11</i>)
	mīṇ	மீன் ‘fish’	(<i>aka.106:2</i>)

Consonant clusters: Consonant clusters do not occur in word-initial position. Consonant clusters, usually composed of two consonants, occur in word-medial or word-final positions. However, there are some restrictions to this kind of clustering. For example, **k** and **ñ** cannot occur together, whereas **k** can follow its homorganic nasal **ñ** or itself: **ñk**; or **kk**.²⁰ There are even instances where three consonants occur as a cluster in word-medial position. The first consonant in a cluster of three consonants is **y**, **r**, or **l** among which, **r** and **l** do not follow a short vowel.²¹

Letters (**eḷuttu**) as Parts of Prosodic Units

In the tradition, the various letters discussed above are considered to be limbs (**uruppu**) of prosodic units. That is, certain prosodic units are defined in terms of these **eḷuttu**. Thus, short vowels and long vowels are supposed to be the limbs of the basic prosodic unit called **acai** as well as of alliteration (**toṭai** ‘stringing’) and rhythmic effect (**vaṇṇam** ‘color, beauty’). The extra-short **u** (**kuṟṟiyal ukaram**) is a limb of an **acai**. Elongated vowels (**uyir aḷapeṭai**) and elongated consonants (**orru aḷapeṭai**) are limbs of alliteration (**toṭai**) and rhythmic effect (**vaṇṇam**). Vowelled consonants (**uyir mey**), the three classes of consonants (hard, soft, and middle classes), shortened **ai** (**aikāra-k-kuṟukkam**), and shortened **au**

Words ending with **ñ** and **v** are reconstructed from related forms:

* uriñ	உரிஞ் ‘to rub’ < uriñiya	(<i>aka.121:8</i>)
* tev	தெவ் ‘to snatch/grab’ < tevi	(<i>pari.11:69</i>)

²⁰ For more, see Tolkāppiyam, **eḷuttatikāram**, **ḷampūraṇam**, Rules 22-30.

²¹ ytt யத்த	uyttu உய்த்து advp of uy ‘to guide’	(<i>narr.101:4</i>)
rkk ரக்க	īrkku ஈர்க்கு ‘straw’	(<i>poru:36</i>)
lpp ழப்ப	ūlppa ஊழ்ப்ப infinitive of ūl ‘to ripen’	(<i>aka.273:17</i>)

(**aukāra-k-kurukkam**) are limbs of alliteration (**toṭai**). The vowelless consonant (**orru**) is a limb of an elongated consonant (**orru alapeṭai**), whereas the **āytam** (**ḥ**) is a limb of **vaṇṇam**.²²

Preoccupation with these letters must not come into play when defining other prosodic units, because the prosodic units they form at a lower level would in turn form prosodic units of a larger level. For example, a letter (**eḷuttu**) is a limb of an **acai** which in turn is a limb of a metrical foot (**cīr**) which in turn is a limb of a line in poetry (**aṭi**). Therefore, it would be irrelevant to talk from the point of view of an **eḷuttu** when considering the overall meter (**pā**) of a poem. One would then talk from the point of view of **cīr**, of which **eḷuttu** is, of course, a limb.

²² Cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Naccinārkkinīyam, ceyyuliyal, Rule 2, page 7.

MORPHOPHONEMICS

(Joining Words and Affixes)

GENERAL: To understand word formation in classical Tamil poetry one has to understand how stems and affixes are joined to other stems and affixes. When a stem or affix is joined to another stem or affix to form a new word, certain kinds of changes occur in their shapes; this process of change is known as “morphophonemics” or “conjoining.” Even when there is no change, the “conjoining” is considered as a morphophonemic process.¹ More specifically, as when items A and B are joined, changes occur in some part of A and/or the first part of B. The following kinds of changes are possible and occur in classical Tamil: (a) one sound becoming another; (b) insertion of an affix between A and B; and (c) deletion of one or more sounds between adjacent sounds when A and B come together.²

¹ Some might be used to the term “sandhi” instead of “morphophonemics.” The Tolkāppiyam uses the term **puṇar nilai** ‘the state of uniting/joining’ (Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 111).

² The Tolkāppiyam refers to these three kinds of changes as **mey piritu ātal** “one shape/form becomes another,” **mikutaḷ** “increase/addition,” and **kunraḷ** “deletion” respec-

In the following pages the various morphophonemic changes observed in classical Tamil are discussed under two major headings: Stem Mutation and Changes Across Stems and Affixes. The present volume is oriented toward describing the words and phrases attested in classical Tamil rather than discussing the historical development of grammatical theories. Therefore, the morphophonemic changes below are discussed primarily from the point of view of the shapes of stems rather than from the point of view of the kinds of changes. First, a general note on stems is provided.

A Note on Stems

Noun stems, adjectival stems, and verb stems are the three types of stems that can be identified on a semantic basis in classical Tamil.³ The singular noun stem, which signifies a singular item, serves as the base for generating plural nouns and adjectival nouns, the adjectival stem for adjectival nouns, and the verb stem for verbal nouns, participial nouns,

tively (Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rule 110).

³ This study does not make a formal distinction between “roots” and “stems,” mainly for the reason that the theoretical distinction between “roots” and “stems” is not part of this study. Here, both have been referred to by the term “stem” because once the roots begin to participate in the process of word formation for further use, they qualify to be called “stems.” For a detailed analysis of Tamil roots and formative suffixes in this period, see Andronov (1969:128-129) and Zvelebil et al. (1967:12-14, 16-20).

Traditional grammarians do not discuss “roots,” but classify Tamil words into two basic types, **peyar** “nouns” and **vinai** “verbs,” and consider two other types, **iṭai** “medial particles” which are basically items like affixes, and **uri** which are certain words which seem to assume special nuances when used in poetry. The **peyar** and **vinai** can function independently while **iṭai** and **uri** are supposed to be dependent upon the former two (Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rules 158 and 159). Actually, some of the words which have been identified as **iṭai** and **uri** by traditional grammarians could as well be construed as verbs and adjectives.

and various verb forms. Adjectival stems can be treated as noun-like stems, and a basic opposition can then be made between “nominal” and “verbal” stems. This basic opposition is followed in this study. Tamil adjectives do not enter into conjugation like the verbs, hence their grouping with the noun stems.⁴

These stems can be classified into three types according to their basic shapes: the bare stem, the mutated stem, and the derived stem. The bare stem is nothing but a “root” which is occasionally followed by a formative suffix. Here, the term “bare” is useful so that one could distinguish it from the derived stem. It can also be called the “basic” stem. A mutated stem is a bare stem which has changed its shape for grammatical reasons. Stem mutation is discussed below. A derived stem is that which contains a bare or mutated stem and a second stem or a grammatical affix. The compound stem, which consists of a basic stem and a second stem is, indeed, a derived stem.

Grammatically, these stems can be classified thus: the bare stem, the oblique stem, the non-oblique stem, the past stem, the non-past stem, the passive stem, and the causative/effective stem.⁵ Affixes are added to these stems in order to perform various grammatical tasks.

⁴ It must be noted, however, that in classical Tamil some adjectival bases show verb-like quality: e.g., **val** ‘to have strength, to be able’; *pirintu āṇṭu uṟaital valliyyōr* ‘he who was able to depart and stay there’ (*naṟṟ.358:12*). Adjectives like **periya** ‘big’ and **ciriya** ‘small’ do contain the oldest past/completive marker **i** and the adjectival participle suffix **a**. One might consider ***val** ‘capable’, ***per** ‘big, large’, ***cir** ‘small, little’, and similar items as verb roots which lost their productivity in this period.

⁵ Many bare stems function as nouns and verbs in classical Tamil: e.g., **malar** ‘to unfold (as a flower)’ (*puṟa.103:3*) or ‘flower(s)’ (*naṟṟ.398:10*). The literary context and the suffixes added to the stem indicate whether the latter is to be interpreted as a noun or a verb.

The oblique stem and the others are discussed elsewhere in this study.

Stem Mutation

“Mutation” refers to the change that takes place within the bare stem. The kinds of changes observed in classical Tamil are described next under three headings: (a) lengthening the vowel in the first syllable; (b) shortening the vowel in the first syllable or reducing a consonant; and (c) doubling or hardening certain consonants.

Lengthening the Vowel in the First Syllable: This phenomenon is observed in nouns derived from verb stems, in adjectival stems entering into a morphophonemic process, and in certain verb stems entering into a conjugation. Examples:

maṛu ‘to be different’ > māru ‘difference’	(<i>malai</i> :62)
keṭu ‘to destroy, perish’ > kēṭu ‘loss of wellbeing’	(<i>narr</i> .359:6)
poru ‘to fight’ > pōr ‘fighting’	(<i>aka</i> .316:7)
vaṭa ‘northern’ > vāṭai ‘north wind’	(<i>narr</i> .312:9)
karu ‘dark’ > kār aṇal ‘dark throat’	(<i>narr</i> .181:1)
ve ‘to steam’ > vēvatu ‘it will steam up’	(<i>kali</i> .142:54)

Shortening the Vowel in the First Syllable or Reducing a Consonant: Long vowels become short, mostly to derive the oblique forms of personal pronouns. This change happens rarely in verb conjugation. The reduction of a consonant happens for metrical reasons. Examples:

tāṇ ‘he’ > taṇ ‘his’	(<i>pura</i> .36:9)
kāṇ ‘see’ > kaṇṭu ‘having seen’ ⁶	(<i>aka</i> .16:11)

⁶ This is the only verb which changes in this manner. Note that it does not change in every context: e.g., **kāṇṭirō** (*aka*.275:19). Some might consider the verbs **vā** ‘to come’

manṇa ‘to ponder; think about’

> **maṇa** ‘to think about’

(*pari.20:70*)

[Note the reduction **nn** > **n**.]

annai ‘mother’ > **aṇai** ‘mother’

(*aiṅk.156:5*)

[Note the reduction **nn** > **n**.]

Hardening/Doubling Certain Consonants in the Stem: One consonantal sound or two adjacent consonantal sounds which are not already “hardened,” that is, which are not **kk**, **cc**, **ṭṭ**, **tt**, **pp**, or **rr**, are “hardened” in certain contexts.⁷ The corresponding “unhardened” and “hardened” sounds are given below first; how and on what occasions such hardening occurs is mentioned subsequently.

and **tā** ‘to give’ to have undergone this kind of change in their conjugations. But it is quite conceivable that the roots of these verbs contain short vowels (***var** and ***tar**). In this study, the “roots” **vā** and **tā** are construed as **var** and **tar** respectively.

⁷ A synthetic approach is followed here to explain stem mutation. The phenomena discussed here under “hardening” have been treated in various ways by many scholars at various times. An attempt is made here to bring those various analyses under a convenient rubric without harming their spirit and integrity. One good example of how a part of this phenomenon was treated is Caldwell’s approach (1976:452). Caldwell says, “Intransitive themes become transitive by the hardening and doubling of the consonant of the appended formative - e.g., *peru-gu*, to abound, by this process becomes *peru-kku*, to increase (actively) to cause to abound.” Another example is how Tamil grammatical tradition explains the change in certain nouns ending with **m**. Certain nouns ending with **m** change their stem-final (**m**) to **tt** before taking a case marker, and this phenomenon is explained in the tradition as adding the inflectional increment **attu** to the stem after deleting the stem-final **m**. This study prefers to understand it as a “hardening” process.

Another way to describe these “hardened” sounds is to say that they are “obstruents.” Note that **ṛṛ** (ṛṛ) is treated here as “hard” or “obstruent” because **ṛ** (ṛ) was an “obstruent” in this period, not a “trill” as in modern Tamil, where the combination **ṛṛ** is pronounced as “ṛṛ” (retroflex stop + trill) or “ṛṛ” (alveolar stop + trill), similar to the first syllable in the English word “train.”

“unhardened” sound	“hardened” sound
k	kk
ṅk	kk
c	cc
c	ñc
ṭ	ṭṭ
ṇ	ṭṭ
ṇṭ	ṭṭ
t	tt
nt	tt
p	pp
m	tt ⁸
m	pp ⁹
mp	pp
y	rr ¹⁰

⁸ The rationale for setting up this correspondence is that non-monosyllabic nouns ending with **m** have oblique forms ending with **tt**. As pointed out above, traditional grammarians and commentators call this **tt** as the **attu-c-cāriyai** “the augment **attu**” (Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rules 120 and 126; Naṅṅūḷ, Rules 244 and 252).

⁹ The rationale for setting up this correspondence is the connection between **tīrum** ‘to turn’ (intransitive) and **tīruppu** ‘to turn’ (transitive). The word ***tīrum** as such is not attested in classical Tamil, but **is** listed as a verb stem in Naṅṅūḷ, Rule 137. Naṅṅūḷ does not give the meaning of **tīrum**, but one could make an educated guess that it means ‘to turn around’ (intransitive), whereas **tīruppu** means ‘to turn ... around’ (causative/effective). This verb ***tīrum** and ***īrum** ‘to cough’ are the only two classical Tamil verbs which end with **m**.

¹⁰ This correspondence is made here because the neuter plural demonstrative pronouns and their oblique forms manifest it: e.g., **avai** ‘those things’ > **avarṛ** ... (oblique). The

<u>l</u>	<u>nr</u>
<u>v</u>	<u>pp</u>
<u>l</u>	<u>tt</u>
<u>l</u>	<u>tt</u>
<u>r</u>	<u>rr</u>
<u>n</u>	<u>rr</u> ¹¹
<u>nr</u>	<u>rr</u>

Where in the Stem Does This “Hardening” Occur: (a) In the stem-final consonant of monosyllabic or disyllabic stems. Examples:

<u>ti</u> n ‘eat’	:	<u>tir</u> ru ‘feed’
<u>u</u> n ‘eat’	:	<u>u</u> ttu ‘feed’
<u>kā</u> n ‘see’	:	<u>kā</u> ttu ‘show/make see’
<u>pū</u> n ‘wear’	:	<u>pū</u> ttu ‘make wear’
<u>tuyi</u> l ‘sleep’	:	<u>tuyir</u> ru ‘make (someone) sleep’
<u>uru</u> l ‘roll over’	:	<u>uru</u> ttu ‘make (someone/something) roll’
<u>mū</u> l ‘emerge/start’	:	<u>mū</u> ttu ‘make (something) emerge/start’

(b) In the penultimate consonant if the stem has more than one syllable and the penultimate syllable is closed. Examples:

<u>mayā</u> ṅku ‘to be confused’	:	<u>mayak</u> ku ‘confusion’
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endings ai (in avai) and y (in *avay) are interchangeable.

Traditional grammarians and commentators call this rr the varru-c-cāriyai “the augment varru” or arru-c-cāriyai “the augment arru” (Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rules 120 and 123; Naṇṇūl, Rules 244 and 250).

¹¹ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 122, which recognizes this kind of “hardening.”

añcu ‘to fear’	:	accu ‘fear’
varuntu ‘grieve, suffer’	:	varuttu ‘make grieve/suffer’
muntai ‘previous’	:	muttai ‘previously’
ōmpu ‘recede, shield’	:	ōppu ‘make recede, prevent’
tōnru ‘appear’	:	tōrru ‘make appear’

- (c) In the last consonant of non-monosyllabic stems with open syllables.
Examples:

peruku ‘to increase/multiply’	:	perukku ‘abundance’
ēru ‘to climb up’	:	ērru ‘to cause ... to climb up’
cuṭu ‘bake’	:	cūṭṭu ‘baked meat’
vayiru	:	vayirru
‘abdominal area/stomach’		‘of the stomach’

On What Occasions Does This “Hardening/Doubling” Occur: The hardening/doubling of a consonant occurs when deriving some nouns, adjectival stems, causative/effective stems, and oblique bases for producing compound nouns and case forms. Examples:

ēru ‘ascend’:	ērrai ‘male of an animal (that ascends its female)’	[verbal noun]
maṛu ‘other: marrai yōr ‘others’ [adjectival stem: marr]		
pin ‘back’: pirrai <i>nilai</i> ‘backward state’ [adjectival stem: pirr]		
tuyil ‘sleep’: tuyirru ‘make ... sleep’ [causative stem: tuyirr]		
mayañku ‘be confused’: mayakku ‘confusion’		
	[causative stem: mayakk]	

puku ‘enter’ + **il** ‘place, residence’

> **pukk** oblique + **il** > **pukkil** ‘entered place/refuge’

[generating an oblique base from a verb stem for deriving a compound noun]

tuñcu ‘sleep’ + **il** ‘place, residence’

> **tucc** oblique + **il** > **tuccil** ‘resting place’

[generating an oblique base from a verb stem for deriving a compound noun]

aṭu ‘to cook; kill’ + **il** ‘place, house’

> **aṭṭ** oblique + **il** > **aṭṭil** ‘cooking place’

[generating an oblique base from a verb stem for deriving a compound noun]

pacu ‘fresh, lively’ + **irā** ‘shrimp, prawn’

> **pacc** oblique + **irā** > **paccirā** ‘fresh shrimp, prawn’

[generating an oblique base from an adjectival stem for deriving a compound noun]

putu ‘new, fresh’ + **akal** ‘shallow container’

> **putt** oblique + **akal** > **puttakal** ‘fresh shallow container’

[generating an oblique base from an adjectival stem for deriving a compound noun]

kuḷampu ‘hoof’ + **vali** ‘path’

> **kuḷappu** oblique + **vali** > **kuḷappu vali** ‘path tread by the hooves’

[generating an oblique base from a noun for deriving a compound noun]

tol ‘ancient, established’ + **icai** ‘fame, reputation’

> **tonr** oblique + **icai** > **tonricai** ‘established reputation’

[generating an oblique base from an adjectival stem for deriving a compound noun]

vayir̥u ‘abdominal area’ + **tī** ‘fire’

> **vayir̥ru** oblique + **tī** > **vayir̥rut̥tī** ‘fire in the stomach; hunger’

[generating an oblique base from a nominal stem for deriving a compound noun]

kan̥ru ‘calf’ + **uri** ‘hide’

> **kan̥ru** oblique + **uri** > **kan̥ruri** ‘hide of a calf’

[generating an oblique base from a nominal stem for deriving a compound noun]

maram ‘tree’ + **āl** case marker

> **maratt** + **āl** > **marattāl** ‘onto the tree, by the tree’

[generating an oblique base from a nominal stem for deriving a case form]

Changes Across Stems and Affixes

The changes that take place across stems and affixes are described under the following headings: (1) when a stem-final long vowel is followed by a vowel-initial item, (2) when a stem-final long vowel is followed by a consonant-initial item, (3) when a stem-final short vowel (not **u**) is followed by a vowel-initial item, (4) when a stem-final short vowel (not **u**) is followed by a consonant-initial item, (5) when a stem-final short vowel **u** is followed by a vowel-initial item, (6) when a stem-final short vowel **u** is followed by a consonant-initial item, (7) when a stem-final consonant is followed by a vowel-initial item, and (8) when a stem-final consonant is followed by a consonant-initial item.

1. When a stem-final long vowel is followed by a vowel-initial item:

1.1.

The stem is monosyllabic and a verb. The following item is a suffix that does not begin with *i*. The initial vowel of the following suffix is deleted and the stem-final vowel is elongated occasionally for the sake of meter.

ā + um > ām	(<i>kali.58:21</i>)
cā + um > cām	(<i>kali.60:27</i>)
pō + um > pōm	(<i>kali.25:11</i>)
tā + um > tāam	(<i>narr.79:3</i>)
mē + a > mēe	(<i>pari.9:79</i>)

1.2.

The stem is monosyllabic and a verb. The following item is a suffix beginning with *i*. The stem-final vowel does not change. The suffix is added directly to the stem.

cī + i > cīi	(<i>kali.101:8</i>)
kai + i > kaii	(<i>matu.419</i>)
tai + i > taii	(<i>kuri.102</i>)
vai + iya > vaiiya	(<i>narr.12:6</i>)

1.3.

The stem has one or more than one syllable. The following item is a suffix or a word. The stem-final vowel in the monosyllabic stem is lengthened occasionally. In most cases, a glide is inserted between the stem and the following item. If the stem-final vowel is *ā*, *ū*, or *au*, the glide *v* is inserted; if the stem-final vowel is *ī* or *ai*, the glide *y* is inserted except when the initial vowel of the suffix following the stem is *i*; occasionally, the glide *ñ* or *n* is inserted between the

stem-final **ai** and the following suffix that does not begin with **i**; if the stem-final vowel is **ē**, the glide **y** is inserted; if the stem-final vowel is **ō**, the glide **v** is inserted. The glide could be **v** if the non-monosyllabic stem ends with **ai**, and **y** if the monosyllabic stem ends with **ō**.

tū + u + ekkar	> tūu ekkar	(<i>paṭṭ.117</i>)
yā + v + atu	> yāvatu	(<i>narr.119:9</i>)
mā + v + ilaṅkai	> māvilaṅkai	(<i>ciṟu.119</i>)
kā + v + iṇ + em	> kāviṇem	(<i>puṟa.206:10</i>)
pā + v + iṇru	‘there is no ...’ > pāvinru	(<i>aka.172:18</i>)
ā + v + um	> āvum	(<i>puṟa.9:1</i>)
acā + v + ātu	> acāvātu	(<i>kuṟu.269:1</i>)
tū + v + a	> tūva	(<i>narr.132:4</i>)
(Some might consider the stem to be tūvu .)		
pū + v + uṭaṇ	> pūvuṭaṇ	(<i>puṟa.224:15</i>)
vau + v + i	> vauvi	(<i>matu.149</i>)
(Some might consider the stem to be vauvu .)		
ī + y + ā	> īyā	(<i>pati.19:18</i>)
ī + y + āt + u	> īyātu	(<i>narr.378:2</i>)
tē + y + am	> tēyam	(<i>aka.383:4</i>)
pulai + y + aṇ	> pulaiyaṇ	(<i>narr.77:1</i>)
maṇai + y + uṟai puṟavu	> maṇaiyuṟai puṟavu	(<i>neṭu.45</i>)
pacalai + y + ai	> pacalaiyai	(<i>aiṅk.200:4</i>)
maṟṟai + y + ōr	> maṟṟaiyōr ¹²	(<i>pari.5:45</i>)
urai + i	> uraii	(<i>pati.40:9</i>)

¹² An example where a derived stem **maṟṟai** consisting of an adjectival stem (**maṟu** ‘other’) and a suffix (**ai**) acts as a stem for further addition.

kolai + v + an > kolaivan	(<i>puṛa.152:8</i>)
vilai + v + an > vilaivan	(<i>puṛa.152:9</i>)
valai + ñ + ar > valaiñar	(<i>peru.274</i>)
vinai + n + ar > vinainar	(<i>pati.62:16</i>)
kō + y + il > kōyil	(<i>neṭu.100</i>)
kō + v + inattār > kōvinattār	(<i>kali.107:3</i>)
kō + v + ē > kōvē	(<i>pati.21:23</i>)
iruttalō + v + aritē > iruttalōvaritē¹³	(<i>puṛa.210:7</i>)

2. When a stem-final long vowel is followed by a consonant-initial item:

2.1.

The stem is monosyllabic. The following item is a suffix. The stem-final vowel is elongated occasionally for the sake of meter. Otherwise, there is no change.

mā (tree) + a + ttu > māattu	(<i>aka.141:21</i>)
tā + a + y > tāay	(<i>paṭṭ:155</i>)
kū 'to call out' + u + y > kūuy	(<i>poru.101</i>)
ē 'to command' + e + y > ēey	(<i>puṛa.341:9</i>)
pō + o + y + a > pōoya	(<i>kali.134:7</i>)
yā + tu > yātu	(<i>aka.48:13</i>)
mā 'animal' + tta > mātta	(<i>pati.67:16</i>)
mā (tree) + tt + in > mātтин	(<i>aka.306:4</i>)
pā + y + in + tu > pāyinru	(<i>aka.85:15</i>)
kū 'to call out' + y > kūy	(<i>kali.38:8</i>)

¹³ An example where a derived stem consisting of a bare stem (**iru** 'to remain') and two suffixes (**ttal** and **ō**) acts as a stem for further addition.

pū + kka > pūkka	<i>(pura.21:13)</i>
pō + y + a > pōya	<i>(kali.143:39)</i>

2.2.

The stem is monosyllabic but not an adjective. The following item is a word, not a suffix.

The stem-final vowel is elongated for metrical reasons. Subsequently, the initial consonant of the noun following the stem is doubled if the stem does not refer to a tree. But, if the stem refers to a tree or begins with a nasal, a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the item following the stem is inserted between the stem and the following item whether the stem-final vowel is elongated or not.

When the stem-final vowel is not elongated, the initial consonant of the following item is optionally doubled and this process is certain when the stem and the following item produce a compound noun.

mā + a + n + taḷir > māantaḷir	<i>(kali.143:27)</i>
mē + e + n + tōl > mēentōl	<i>(aka.3:1)</i>
mē + e + n + tōnri > mēentōnri	<i>(matu.133)</i>
cē + e + c + cevi > cēeccevi	<i>(kali.103:51)</i>
mā + n + taḷir > māntaḷir	<i>(pari.8:38)</i>
mē + n + tōl > mēntōl	<i>(pura.321:2)</i>
mē + n + tōnri > mēntōnri	<i>(pati.89:12)</i>
ā + k + kural > ākkural	<i>(pura.362:8)</i>
ī + t + torum > īttorum	<i>(pati.61:13)</i>
tū + t + tirai > tūttirai	<i>(kuru.55:1)</i>
vai + t + talai > vaittalai	<i>(pati.44:18)</i>
tai + n + nīr > tainnīr	<i>(pari.11:115)</i>

pai + p + paya > paippaya ¹⁴	(<i>aka.106:3</i>)
kai + m + makavu > kaimmakavu	(<i>pari.15:47</i>)
pō + t + tantu > pōttantu	(<i>narr.80:4</i>)
tū + maṇal > tūmaṇal	(<i>kuru.51:3</i>)
pai + paya > paipaya	(<i>narr.306:1</i>)
pō + taru(m) > pōtaru(m)	(<i>aka.52:8</i>)

2.3.

The stem is monosyllabic and an adjective: **mā** ‘big, dark’, **tī** ‘sweet’, **mī** ‘rising’, **pū** ‘soft’, **tē** ‘sweet, pleasant’, **pē** ‘awesome, frightening’, **ai** ‘soft, five’, **pai** ‘broad, wide’, **mai** ‘dark, black’, and **vai** ‘sharp.’ The following item is a noun.

The stem-final vowel is elongated for the meter. Subsequently, the initial consonant of the following item (if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**) would be doubled again for meter. If the initial consonant of the item following the noun is a nasal or a semi-vowel, there is no change in the form of doubling.

If the stem-final is not elongated, different adjectives behave differently, and in most cases, a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the noun following the stem is inserted between the stem and the noun.¹⁵

mā + a + t + tāl > māattāl	(<i>matu:178</i>)
mā + a + kāviri > māa kāviri	(<i>paṭṭ:116</i>)

¹⁴ This example is a “doublet.” A word formed by duplicating the stem is here called a “doublet.” Regarding the doubling of the word-initial consonant of the item following the stem in such cases, compare modern Tamil forms like **cīccī** < **cī** + **cī** and **tūttū** < **tū** + **tū**, which are expressions of contempt.

¹⁵ Some might consider the nasal **m** to be present intrinsically as the stem-final of these adjectival stems.

tū + u + neñcam > tūuneñcam ¹⁶	(<i>kuṛu.157:2</i>)
pē + e + viḷavu > pēeviḷavu	(<i>pari.5:14</i>)
mā + k + kal > mākkal	(<i>aka.392:18</i>)
mā + tavar > mātavar	(<i>pari.5:38</i>)
mā + nilam > mānilam	(<i>naṛṛ.ka.vā:1</i>)
tī + ṇ + kaṇi > tīṇkaṇi	(<i>puṛa.281:1</i>)
tī + n + tayir > tīntayir	(<i>aka.87:1</i>)
tī + m + puṇal > tīmpuṇal	(<i>naṛṛ.70:7</i>)
tī + neñcam > tīneñcam	(<i>pari.5:73</i>)
mī + k + kūṛṛattu > mīkkūṛṛattu	(<i>ciṛu.212</i>)
mī + p + pāl > mīppāl	(<i>pari.10:79</i>)
mī + nīr > mīnīr	(<i>pari.21:40</i>)
pū + ṇ + kuḷai > pūṇkuḷai	(<i>poru.30</i>)
tē + k + kokku > tēkkokku	(<i>kuṛu.26:6</i>)
ai + ṇ + kai > aiṇkai	(<i>pari.3:37</i>)
pai + ñ + cuṇai > paiñcuṇai	(<i>tiru.253</i>)
pai + ñ + ñilam > paiññilam ¹⁷	(<i>pati.17:9</i>)
mai + m + mīṇ > maimmīṇ	(<i>puṛa.117:1</i>)
vai + n + nuti > vainnuti	(<i>puṛa.288:1</i>)

2.4.

The stem has more than one syllable. The following item is a suffix.
There is no change.

vāḷai + kku > vāḷaikku	(<i>aka.126:8</i>)
mutumai + kku > mutumaikku	(<i>pari.2:17-18</i>)

¹⁶ This form is attested in the anthologies edited by Vaiyapuri Pillai.

¹⁷ The initial consonant of **nilam** ‘earth’ is changed (“palatalized”) to **ñ** because of the stem-final **ai**, which is a palatal vowel. Accordingly, the homorganic nasal inserted between the stem and the following noun is also a palatal.

amai + ti > amaiti (pari.4:71)

mutalai + ttu > mutalaittu (aink.24:2)

2.5.

The stem has more than one syllable. The following item is a verb form or a nominal. If the stem-final vowel is **ā**, it is elongated. In all cases, the initial consonant of the following item is doubled, if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

takā + a + t + takā > takāattakā (pari.8:57)

(Note that **takā** is a derived stem from **taku**. The **ā** in **takā** is a negative suffix.)

miṭā + a + c + conri > miṭaacconri (kuri:201)

māmai + k + kaḷaṅkaṇi > māmaikkaḷaṅkaṇi (malai:35-36)

ninaḷ + t + torum > ninaittorum (kuri:251)

naṭalai + p + paṭṭu > naṭalaippaṭṭu (kali.95:33)

vaḷai + naral > vaḷainaral (narr.ka.vā:1)

3. When a stem-final short vowel (not **u**) is followed by a vowel-initial item:

3.1.

The stem is monosyllabic and the following item is a suffix or a nominal.

When the stem is the deictic **a**, **i**, or **e**, the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following suffix, whereas the glide **vv** is inserted when the following item is a noun.

When the stem is not a deictic and the following item is a suffix, the glide is **yy** if the item following the stem is an adjectival/participial noun suffix; the glide is **vv** if the item following the stem is not an adjectival/participial noun suffix. Instead of inserting the glide **vv**

between the stem and the following item, another type of change is possible; that is, to lengthen the stem-final vowel and insert subsequently the glide *y* before an item beginning with the vowel *i* and insert the glide *v* before an item beginning with any other vowel. No such glide is inserted when the suffix following the stem is **um**, but the initial vowel of the suffix is deleted.

a + v + a<u>n</u> > avan	<i>(poru:64)</i>
i + v + a<u>l</u> > ival	<i>(kuri:248)</i>
e + v + a<u>l</u> > eval	<i>(pari.6:91)</i>
a + vv + āyam > avvāyam	<i>(kali.136:7)</i>
i + vv + ulakam > ivvulakam	<i>(kuru.273:7)</i>

ce + yy + a<u>n</u> > ceyyan	<i>(tiru:206)</i>
ce + yy + ō<u>l</u> > ceyyōl	<i>(aka.316:13)</i>
ve + yy + a<u>n</u> > veyyan	<i>(kali.75:10)</i>
ve + yy + ō<u>n</u> > veyyōn	<i>(pari.8:67)</i>
no + yy + ār > noyyār	<i>(kali.24:16)</i>

ce + vv + a<u>n</u> > cevvan	<i>(narr.277:3)</i>
ve + vv + ar > vevvar	<i>(pati.41:20)</i>
o + vv + ā > ovvā	<i>(pari.11:72)</i>
no + vv + al > novval	<i>(aka.98:22)</i>
no + vv + iyal > novviyal	<i>(aka.388:11)</i>

a + y + i<u>ṭ</u>ai > āyiṭai	<i>(kuri:137)</i>
ce + y + i<u>t</u>al > cēyital	<i>(ciru:75)</i>
ce + y + i<u>r</u>ā > cēyirā	<i>(narr.31:2)</i>
no + y + iyar > nōyiyar	<i>(aka.25:16)</i>

ce + v + a<u>ṭ</u>i > cēvaṭi	<i>(aka.89:18)</i>
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v e + v + ai > vēvai	(<i>poru.104</i>)
no + v + al > nōval ‘Do not grieve’	(<i>aka.25:16</i>)
no + v + al > nōval ‘I am grieving’	(<i>aka.63:3</i>)
no + v + ēn > nōvēn ‘I am not grieving’	(<i>aka.63:3</i>)
v e + um > vēm	(<i>kuru.102:1</i>)
no + um > nōm	(<i>narr.118:11</i>)

3.2.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a suffix.

The stem-final vowel is lengthened occasionally. The stem-final vowel **a** is lengthened to **ā** preceding an item beginning with **a/ā**, and to **ai** preceding an item beginning with **i**. The stem-final vowel **i** is lengthened to **ī** or **ai** preceding a suffix beginning with **i**. Subsequently there are the following possibilities: the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following suffix; no glide is inserted and a vowel cluster emerges as a result of joining the stem and the following item; no glide is inserted and the initial vowel of the item following the stem is deleted.

If the stem-final is not lengthened, a glide **k**, **y**, or **v**, is inserted between the stem and the following item.

kaṭa + v + a > kaṭāva	(<i>tiru.110</i>)
kaṭa + v + ā > kaṭāvā	(<i>pati.70:6</i>)
para + v + al > parāval	(<i>pati.71:22</i>)
tuḷa + v + um > tuḷāvum	(<i>kali.145:43</i>)
maka + ar > makāaar	(<i>puṛa.291:1</i>)
maka + ar > makāar	(<i>ciṛu.56</i>)
vaṭa + atu > vaṭāatu	(<i>aka.59:3</i>)
kuṇa + atu > kuṇāatu	(<i>aka.90:9</i>)

puta + am > putāam	(<i>puṛa.391:16</i>)
pula + al > pulāal	(<i>aka.270:2</i>)
kaṭa + iya > kaṭaiiya	(<i>puṛa.7:1</i>)
ira + iya > iraiiya	(<i>pati.52:11</i>)
kala + i > kalaii	(<i>aka.266:5</i>)
tuḷa + i > tuḷaii	(<i>malai:181</i>)
ciṇa + i + y + a > ciṇaiiya	(<i>kurī:229</i>)
viṇa + i > viṇaii	(<i>aka.300:15</i>)
kuvī + i > kuvaii	(<i>peru:104</i>)
kaṭi + iyar > kaṭīiyar	(<i>narr.134:4</i>)
maka + ar > makār	(<i>malai:217</i>)
pula + al > pulāl¹⁸	(<i>narr.202:1</i>)
vaya + um > vayāam	(<i>aink.51:2</i>)
maka + k + ir > makakir	(<i>puṛa.388:10</i>)
muṭi + y + ā > muṭiyā	(<i>pari.8:42</i>)
pari + y + ū > pariyū	(<i>pari.7:72</i>)
eṛi + y + ar > eṛiyar	(<i>pati.52:22</i>)
kaṭa + v + a > kaṭava	(<i>aink.237:1</i>)
pula + v + a > pulava	(<i>aka.8:7</i>)
para + v + al > paraval	(<i>pari.10:116</i>)
pula + v + al > pulaval	(<i>narr.63:3</i>)
kiḷa + v + aṇ > kiḷavaṇ	(<i>puṛa.152:11</i>)
kaṭa + v + āt + ōr > kaṭavātōr	(<i>aka.279:5</i>)
kala + v + āt + u > kalavātu	(<i>pari.20:19</i>)
kala + v + i > kalavi	(<i>pari.8:119</i>)
ciṇa + v + i + y + a > ciṇaviya	(<i>narr.100:6</i>)

¹⁸ Cf. The anthologies edited by Vaiyapuri Pillai.

viṇa + v + i > viṇavi	<i>(narr.365:4)</i>
tuḷa + v + um > tuḷavum	<i>(narr.267:4)</i>
kiḷa + v + ōy + ē > kiḷavōyē	<i>(pati.54:17)</i>

3.3

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels and is not an adjective. The following item is a suffix. The stem-final vowel is deleted. The consonant preceding the deleted stem-final is doubled if it is **ṭ** or **t**.¹⁹

mata + am > mattam	<i>(peru.156)</i>
vaṭi 'to sift; bend' + i > vaṭṭi	<i>(narr.210:3)</i>

3.4

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels and may be an adjective. The following item is a word, not a suffix.

When the item following the stem is a nominal, the stem-final vowel is lengthened, and subsequently, there are these possibilities: the lengthened stem-final vowel may be further elongated for the sake of meter and the initial vowel of the nominal is deleted; the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following nominal without deleting the initial vowel of the nominal whether the lengthened stem-final vowel is elongated or not

If the word following the stem is not a noun, there is no change to the stem-final vowel, and the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following item.

vaḷa + akam > vaḷākam	<i>(pura.189:1)</i>
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¹⁹ A new approach is followed here to explain the examples given in this paragraph. Some might consider **mattam** and **vaṭṭi** to be given lexical items. Theoretically, the other consonants which could precede the stem-final are **k**, **c**, **p**, and **ṛ**.

muḷa + arai > muḷārai (pati.pati.5:14)

vaḷa + akam > vaḷāakam (kali.146:28)

muḷa + v + arai > muḷāvarai (pura.85:7)

pula + v + ampu > pulāavampu (pura.181:5)

uva + v + iṇi > uvaviṇi (aka.65:7)

3.5.

The stem has more than one syllable. The disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. The following item is a suffix. A glide is inserted between the stem and the following item. The glide is **v** if the stem-final vowel is **a**, and **y** if the stem-final vowel is **i**.²⁰

nalla + v + ai > nallavai (pari.20:74)

mēni + y + oṭu > mēniyoṭu (kuru.33:3)

piṛavi + y + ai > piṛaviyai (pari.5:12)

vaḷḷi + y + ai > vaḷḷiyai (pati.54:1)

3.6.

The stem has more than one syllable. The disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. The following item is a word. The stem-final vowel is often deleted or a glide is inserted between the stem and the following item. The glide is **v** if the stem-final vowel is **a**, and **y** if the stem-final vowel is **i**.

vālka + avan tālē > vālkavan tālē (pura.70:19)

vayaṅka + iṭṭu > vayaṅkiṭṭu (kali.55:2)

iṛuka + iṛukki > iṛukirukki (pari.12:59)

enra + ūla > enrūla (aiṅk.374:1)

²⁰ The doubled **v** in instances like **ariyavvē** < **ariya + vv + ē** (narr.23:9), instead of **ariyavē** is due to metrical requirement. For a note on metrical requirement, see “Lengthening of Sounds (aḷapeṭai) and Vowel Clusters.”

koḷka + eṇa > koḷkeṇa	<i>(puṛa.143:1)</i>
tarikka + eṇa > tarikkeṇa	<i>(pari.5:40)</i>
arunta + ēmānta > aruntēmānta	<i>(puṛa.101:9)</i>
kaṇri + iṭiṇ > kaṇriṭiṇ	<i>(pari.6:98)</i>
arunti + ukaḷa > aruntukaḷa	<i>(aka.14:6)</i>
vāḷka + v + avanṇ kaṇṇi > vāḷkavavanṇ kaṇṇi	<i>(pati.20:5)</i>
ariya + v + alla > ariyavalla²¹	<i>(aka.8:5)</i>
vāḷka + v + enru > vāḷkavenru	<i>(puṛa.34:16)</i>
ūṭṭi + y + anna > ūṭṭiyanna²²	<i>(aka.388:24)</i>
aruvi + y + iḷitarum > aruviyilitarum²³	<i>(narr.347:7)</i>

4. When a stem-final short vowel (not u) is followed by a consonant-initial item:

4.1.

The stem is monosyllabic. The following item is a suffix. There is no change when the stem is a deictic, or when the item following the stem is not an adjectival/participial noun suffix. When the item following the stem is an adjectival/participial noun suffix, two changes are possible: the glide *y* is inserted between the stem and the suffix or the glide *vv* followed by an enunciative *i* is inserted between the stem and the suffix.²⁴

²¹ Cf. The anthologies edited by Vaiyapuri Pillai.

²² Note that *ūṭṭi* is the adverbial participle form of *ūṭṭu* 'to feed.'

²³ Cf. The anthologies edited by Vaiyapuri Pillai.

²⁴ When the suffix *mai* is added, the glide *y* changes/assimilates to the initial consonant of the suffix, as for example: *ce + y + mai > cemmai*; *ve + y + mai > vemmai*. One could also analyze these forms differently: *ce + y + m + mai > *ceymmai > cemmai*; *ve + y + m + mai > *veymmmai > vemmai*. This would then explain forms like *noymmai* (< *no + y + m + mai*) which occur in later texts.

a + tu > atu	<i>(narr.308:8)</i>
i + tu > itu	<i>(kuri:21)</i>
o + tt + aṇ + ir > ottanir	<i>(aka.26:19)</i>
no + nt + u > nontu	<i>(narr.177:8)</i>
v e + y + tu > veytu	<i>(aka.203:14)</i>
no + y + tu > noytu	<i>(pura.75:10)</i>
ce + vv + i + tu > cevvitu	<i>(pati.22:8)</i>
no + vv + i + tu > novvitu	<i>(narr.315:9)</i>

4.2.

The stem is monosyllabic. The following item is a nominal. The initial consonant of the nominal following the stem is doubled. In the case of the stem **no** 'soft, fine', the glide **y** is inserted between the stem and the following noun.

a + k + kaṭal > akkaṭal	<i>(pura.198:19)</i>
a + ñ + ñāṇru > aññāṇru	<i>(kali.19:2)</i>
i + p + paṇai nallūr > ippaṇai nallūr	<i>(pura.351:12)</i>
e + n + nīrirō > ennīrirō	<i>(kuru.219:7)</i>
e + v + vaḷi > evvaḷi	<i>(kuru.40:3)</i>
no + y + n + nūl²⁵	<i>(pari.10:10)</i>

²⁵ Some might consider **noy** as a verb stem meaning 'to become soft.'

4.3.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a suffix. The stem-final vowel **a** is lengthened when the following suffix is **y**. There is no change in other cases.

vaḷa + y > vaḷāy	(<i>pari.11:105</i>)
viṇa + y > viṇāy	(<i>kuri:4</i>)
kuḷa + kku > kuḷakku	(<i>kali.108:21</i>)
naṭa + tt + a > naṭatta	(<i>pari.10:43</i>)
pula + tti > pulatti	(<i>aka.39:25</i>)
kiṭa + pp(i) + i > kiṭappi	(<i>kuṛu.114:1</i>)
aṇi + kku > aṇikku	(<i>kali.85:17</i>)
kaṇi + cci > kaṇicci	(<i>pati.22:12</i>)
naṇi + ttu > naṇittu	(<i>pari.17:25</i>)
uri + ttu > urittu	(<i>narr.327:7</i>)
uri + tu > uritu	(<i>narr.322:8</i>)
oṭi + vai > oṭivai 'breaking'	(<i>aka.301:5</i>)
aṛi + mati > aṛimati	(<i>puṛa.161:25</i>)

4.4.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels but is not an adjective. The following item is a word. If the stem refers to a tree other than the jack tree, a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the following item is inserted between the stem and the following item. In all other cases, the stem-final vowel is elongated and the initial consonant of the following word is subsequently doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

kaḷa + ṇ + kaṇi > kaḷaṇkaṇi	(<i>malai:36</i>)
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viḷa + m + paḷam > viḷampaḷam ²⁶	(<i>narr.12:1</i>)
puḷi + ṇ + kāy > puḷiṅkāy ²⁷	(<i>aiṅk.51:3</i>)
kaṭa + a + k + kaḷiru > kaṭāakkaḷiru	(<i>kali.101:36</i>)
cuṛa + a + k + koṭiyōṇ > cuṛāakkoṭiyōṇ ²⁸	(<i>kali.147:42</i>)
pala ‘jack tree’ + a + p + pōla > palāappōla ²⁹	(<i>peru:408</i>)
kala + a + t + tānaiyan > kalāattānaiyan	(<i>puṛa.69:11</i>)
kaṭa + a + yānai > kaṭāayānai	(<i>puṛa.145:3</i>)

4.5.

The stem has two short syllables and is an adjective. The following item is a noun. If the initial consonant of the noun following the stem is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**, it is doubled or a homorganic nasal is inserted between the stem and the noun, as in most cases. If the stem is **maḷa** ‘young’, there is no change.

maḷa + kaḷiru > maḷakaḷiru	(<i>narr.192:2</i>)
maṭa + k + kaṇam > maṭakkaṇam	(<i>narr.248:8</i>)
taṭa + k + kai > taṭakkai	(<i>tiru:5</i>)
taṭa + k + kōṭṭu āmāṇ > taṭakkōṭṭu āmāṇ	(<i>aka.238:7</i>)
puḷi + k + kaḷā > puḷikkaḷā	(<i>puṛa.177:9</i>)
puḷi + c + cuvai > puḷiccuvai	(<i>narr.87:4</i>)
taṭa + ṇ + kōṭṭu āmāṇ > taṭaṅkōṭṭu āmāṇ	(<i>narr.57:1</i>)
paḷa + ṇ + kayiru > paḷaṅkayiru	(<i>narr.284:10</i>)
naṇa + ṇ + cāral > naṇaṅcāral	(<i>kali.44:1</i>)
naṇa + n + talai > naṇantalai	(<i>peru:291</i>)
taṭa + n + tāḷ > taṭantāḷ	(<i>narr.91:4</i>)
iḷa + m + pētai > iḷampētai	(<i>puṛa.326:2</i>)

²⁶ Cf. *viḷaviṇ ... vellil* (*puṛa.181:1*).

²⁷ Some might consider this form as derived from *puḷi + am* (augment) + *kāy*.

²⁸ Cf. *cuṛa vaḷaṅkum* ‘where the sharks move around’ (*poru:203*).

²⁹ Cf. *palavin paḷattuḷ* ‘inside the jack fruit’ (*aka.292:14*).

maṭa + mayil > maṭa mayil (pari.15:40)

taṭa + varai > taṭavarai (pari.19:23)

4.6.

The stem has more than one syllable. The disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. The following item is a suffix. There is no change.³⁰

kūḷi + kku > kūlikku (kali.101:26)

kuruti + ttu > kurutittu (pari.12:85)

nīṭṭi + tt + a > nīṭṭitta (kali.83:6)

vaṭṭi + tt + u > vaṭṭittu (aka.218:5)

manti + kku > mantikku (naṭṭ.353:6)

4.7.

The stem has two or more syllables and is not an adjective. The following item is a nominal, but not an adjective. The stem-final vowel does not change. When the stem or the item following the stem is not an adjectival noun or a word of geographic direction, the initial consonant **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p** of the word following the stem is doubled.

cīraṭi + k + kaṇam koḷ > cīraṭikkaṇaṅkoḷ³¹ (malai:43-44)

kaṭanta + k + kāl > kaṭantakkāl (pari.3:54)

colla + t + takkār > collattakkār (kali.88:5)

pañci + p + picir > pañcippicir (aka.283:14)

kāñci + p + paṇi muṛi > kāñcippaṇi muṛi (puṛa.344:8)

³⁰ The word **pāṭṭi** (**pāṇ + ti**) ‘bardess’ would be a good example of a stem of this kind, though there is no attestation of it followed by a consonant-initial suffix. Cf. **pāṭṭiyar** (matu:749).

³¹ An instance where a derived stem (**cīraṭi**) consisting of **cīru** ‘small’ and **aṭi** ‘feet’ acts as a stem for further addition.

kaṭi + p + pakai	(malai:22)
iraṭi + p + pommāl	(malai:169)
muḷa + mā (animal)	(aiṅk.364:1)
kaṭi + matil	(peru:451)
vañci + murram	(puṛa.373:24)
kuṭa + kārṛu	(peru:240)
kuṇa + kuṭa + kaṭal	(matu:71)
cila + cila	(pari.12:39)
vaṭa + terku	(pati.31:16)
mīḷi + neñcu	(aka.379:4)
vēṅkaṭa + neṭuvarai	(aka.85:9)
pala + pala	(pari.12:37)
vaṭa + pulam	(puṛa.391:7)
maḷa + pulam	(aka.61:12)

4.8.

The stem has two or more syllables. The following item is a verb form. The stem-final vowel does not change. The initial consonant of the item following the stem is doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**. The doubling seems to be optional if the stem-final vowel is **i**.³⁴

vāḷa + c + ceyta nalviṇai	vāḷacceyta nalviṇai	(puṛa.367:10)
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³² Note that **cila** 'a few' is an adjectival noun.

³³ Note that **pala** 'many' is an adjectival noun.

³⁴ A few grammatical comments are in order. Certain infinitives and affirmative adjectival/relative participles end with **a**, and certain adverbial participles end with **i**. Among them, the infinitives ending with **(kk)a**, and the adverbial participles ending with **i** do trigger the doubling of the initial consonant of the verbal forms following them. On the other hand, adjectival/relative participles which end with **a** or **iya** trigger this kind of doubling only when they precede certain postpositions like **kaṭai**, **kaṇ**, and **kāl**: e.g., **vanta + k + kaṭai**.

viya + t + taku > viyattaku	(<i>pari.9:82</i>)
para + t + tara > parattara	(<i>kali.106:31</i>)
tumiya + p + paṇṇi > tumiya + p + paṇṇi	(<i>aka.45:10</i>)
moḷi + k + koḷinē > moḷikkoḷinē	(<i>naṛṛ.146:11</i>)
paṇi + p + payantana > paṇippayantana	(<i>aiṅk.266:4</i>)
maruḷi + koḷ > maruḷi koḷ	(<i>kali.14:11</i>)
eṛi + t + taru katir > eṛittaru katir	(<i>kali.9:1</i>)
eṛi + tarum > eṛitarum	(<i>kuṛu.110:7</i>)
aṭi + p + paṭa > aṭippaṭa	(<i>aka.209:5</i>)
aṭi + paṭa > aṭipaṭa	(<i>aka.379:25</i>)

4.9.

The stem has two or more syllables. The following item is a suffix or a word. The stem-final vowel and the consonant preceding it are deleted in many cases as the process known as haplology. In either situation, the initial consonant of the item following the stem is doubled.

uruva + k + kutti > uruvakkutti	(<i>kuṛu.255:2</i>)
cāva + k + kutti > cākkutti³⁵	(<i>kali.101:16</i>)
cāva + c + ceyyār > cācceyyār	(<i>naṛṛ.226:2</i>)
maka + k + kaḷ > makkaḷ	(<i>kali.94:22</i>)
maraiikka + k + koṇṭa > maraikkkoṇṭa³⁶	(<i>puṛa.60:11</i>)

³⁵ Traditional grammars construe the stem to be *cāva* (cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rule 210), hence the present analysis. However, in the case of *cākkutti* and *cācceyyār* (*naṛṛ.226:2*), it is quite conceivable that the stem is *cāya* 'to lose strength, cave in' rather than *cāva* 'to die.' Compare the forms *cāay* (*naṛṛ.14:1*), *cāymār* (*puṛa.166:5*).

³⁶ It could simply be *marai* 'to conceal' + *k* + *koṇṭa* (< *koḷ* 'to take, hold').

5. When a stem-final short vowel u is followed by a vowel-initial item:

5.1.

The stem is monosyllabic. The following item is a suffix. When the resultant form is not a pronoun or numeral adjective, the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following item; otherwise, the glide **v** is inserted. The stem-final vowel of the numeral adjective stem is lengthened.

tu + vv + ā > tuvvā (pati.60:12)

(Some might consider the stem to be **tuvvu**.)

u + v + a| > uva| (pari.11:123)

u + v + an > uvan (narr.127:3)

mu + v + ir > mūvir (pura.109:2)

5.2.

The stem is monosyllabic. The following item is a nominal. The stem-final vowel is lengthened and the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following item.

mu + v + uru > mūvuru (pari.13:37)

mu + v + iru 'twice' > mūviru 'two times three' (tiru:103)

5.3.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a suffix. In most cases, the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following item. The glide (**k**)**k** or **m** is inserted rarely if the consonant preceding the stem-final is **l**. When the stem is a non-rational pronoun and the suffix is a case/oblique marker, the stem-final vowel is deleted.

ka|u + v + a > ka|uva (aka.272:2)

pufu + v + ar > putuvar (narr.393:12)

iru + v + ar > iruvar	(<i>tiru</i> :178)
katu + v + al > katuval	(<i>aka</i> .8:3)
ci<u>ṛ</u>u + v + ar > ci<u>ṛ</u>uvar	(<i>naṛṛ</i> .330:9)
iru ‘two’ + v + ām > iruvām ‘we two’	(<i>kuṛu</i> .237:4)
iru ‘to pound’ + v + ām > iruvām ‘Let us pound ...’	(<i>kali</i> .41:3)
katu + v + iya > katuviya	(<i>peru</i> :287)
ku<u>ḷ</u>u + v + i<u>n</u> + a > ku<u>ḷ</u>uvina	(<i>naṛṛ</i> .367:5)
pa<u>ṭ</u>u + v + il > pa<u>ṭ</u>uvil	(<i>aka</i> .79:3)
ke<u>ḷ</u>u + v + u > ke<u>ḷ</u>uvu	(<i>pari</i> .6:6)
atu ‘it’ + v + ē (particle) > atuvē	(<i>aka</i> .218:17)
putu + v + ōr > putuvōr	(<i>malai</i> :288)
mutu + v + ōr > mutuvōr	(<i>ci<u>ṛ</u>u</i> :231)
ma<u>ḷ</u>u + k + a > ma<u>ḷ</u>uka	(<i>pari</i> .6:16)
i<u>ḷ</u>u + kk + i > i<u>ḷ</u>ukki	(<i>aka</i> .107:14)
i<u>ḷ</u>u + k + i > i<u>ḷ</u>uki	(<i>puṛa</i> .281:3)
ma<u>ḷ</u>u + k + i > ma<u>ḷ</u>uki	(<i>puṛa</i> .377:12)
ku<u>ḷ</u>u + m + a > ku<u>ḷ</u>uma	(<i>matu</i> :677)
peru + m + ān > perumān	(<i>kali</i> .82:21)
ke<u>ḷ</u>u + m + i<u>n</u> + a > ke<u>ḷ</u>umina	(<i>puṛa</i> .345:2)
atu ‘it’ + a<u>n</u> > ata<u>n</u>	(<i>kuṛi</i> :142)
atu ‘it’ + ai > atai	(<i>pari</i> .11:71)

5.4.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. It is a verb or rarely an adjective. The following item is a suffix.

In most cases, the stem-final vowel **u** is deleted and the initial vowel of the following suffix is lengthened if it is already not. Further elongation of the stem-final vowel is occasional.

The stem-final **u** changes to **ai** if the following suffix is **i** and the only attested example **vakaii** is given below.

oru + al + iṇ > orālin	(<i>pati.23:17</i>)
naku + al + miṇ > nakānmin	(<i>kali.145:12</i>)
vaḷu + āt + u > vaḷātu	(<i>puṛa.263:3</i>)
kuḷu + am > kuḷāam	(<i>matu.360</i>)
ciṛu + ar > ciṛāar	(<i>peru.223</i>)
paku + ar > pakāar	(<i>aka.181:22</i>)
viṭu + al > viṭāal	(<i>kali.112:7</i>)
eḷu + al > eḷāal	(<i>poru.56</i>)
iṛu + al + iyarō > iṛāaliyarō	(<i>pati.40:2</i>)
kuḷu + al + iṇ > kuḷāalin	(<i>pati.29:5</i>)
iṭu + ā ēṇi > iṭāa ēṇi	(<i>pati.24:14</i>)
oru + ā nīr > orāanīr	(<i>pati.72:9</i>)
maru + ā yāṇai > marāa yāṇai	(<i>aka.13:7</i>)
vaḷu + āt + u > vaḷāatu	(<i>tiru.177</i>)
peru + āṇ > perāan³⁷	(<i>kuṛi.243</i>)
keḷu + i > keḷīi	(<i>peru.399</i>)
kuḷu + i > kuḷīi	(<i>poru.226</i>)
iru + i > irīi	(<i>tiru.234</i>)
oru + i > orīi	(<i>matu.498</i>)
veru + i > verīi	(<i>tiru.310</i>)
viṭu + īr > viṭīir	(<i>kuṛi.144</i>)
atu + um > atūum	(<i>aka.292:6</i>)
katu + um > katūum	(<i>kuṛu.8:2</i>)
kaḷu + um cāral > kaḷūum cāral	(<i>naṛṛ.63:10</i>)
muku + ūu > mukūu	(<i>pari.16:14</i>)
aṭu + ūu niṇṇu > aṭūu niṇṇu	(<i>aka.322:3</i>)

³⁷ In situations such as this, traditional commentators would posit a negative marker (ā) between the stem and the suffix. Cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 450, where the commentator says that the negative marker is deleted in cases like **uṇṇāy** 'you will not eat' < **uṇ** 'eat' + ā negative marker + āy PNG.

viṭu + ēṇ > viṭēṇ³⁸ (narr.350:6)
vaku + i > vakaii (narr.120:5)

5.5.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a word, not suffix. The following changes are possible: the stem-final is deleted and the initial vowel of the following item is lengthened if it is not already long; the stem-final is not deleted, but lengthened and a glide *v* is inserted between the stem and the following item. The stem-final may stay unchanged and the glide *v/k* is inserted between the stem and the following item.

paru + arai > parārai (tiru:10)
paru + arai > parāarai (poru:104)
atu + anru > atāanru (tiru:77)
paru + ēr eṇḷ > parēr eṇḷ (paṭṭ:294)
itu + ōr > itōr (kali.104:18)
oru + ōr + kai > *orōorkai > orōokai (kali.18:9)
taḷu + v + aṇi > taḷūuvaṇi (aka.176:15)
paru + v + uṇai > parūuvuṇai (aka.218:4)
atu + v + āyiṇ > atuvāyiṇ (kali.24:13)
taḷu + v + aṇi > taḷuvaṇi (kuru.294:2)
ciṇu + k(u) + iṭaiyār > ciṇukiṭaiyār (pari.10:106)

5.6.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a suffix or a nominal. The stem-final is deleted and the vowel in the first syllable of the stem is lengthened.

³⁸ In situations such as this, traditional commentators would posit a negative marker (*ē*) between the stem and the suffix. Cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 450, where the commentator says that the negative marker is deleted in cases like **uṇṇēṇ** 'I will not eat' < **uṇ** 'eat' + *ē* negative marker + **ēṇ** PNG.

itu + ā > itā	(<i>pari.8:60</i>)
ce<u>ṛ</u>u + ēl + ka > cē<u>rē</u>rka	(<i>pari.20:68</i>)
na<u>l</u>am ke<u>l</u>(u) + a<u>r</u>ivai > na<u>l</u>am kē<u>l</u>a<u>r</u>ivai	(<i>ku<u>ṛ</u>u.338:8</i>)
pa<u>c</u>u + a<u>ṭ</u>ai > pā<u>ṭ</u>a<u>ṭ</u>ai	(<i>ci<u>ṛ</u>u.182</i>)
ci<u>ṛ</u>u + a<u>ṭ</u>i > cī<u>ṛ</u>a<u>ṭ</u>i	(<i>ci<u>ṛ</u>u.32</i>)
ka<u>r</u>u + a<u>ṇ</u>al > kā<u>r</u>a<u>ṇ</u>al	(<i>na<u>rṛ</u>.181:1</i>)
mu<u>t</u>u + ū<u>r</u> > mū<u>t</u>ū<u>r</u>	(<i>ci<u>ṛ</u>u.201</i>)
o<u>r</u>u + ū<u>r</u> > ō<u>r</u>ū<u>r</u>	(<i>ku<u>ṛ</u>u.172:5</i>)
pe<u>r</u>u + e<u>ḷ</u>il > pē<u>rē</u>lil	(<i>pu<u>ṛ</u>a.293:4</i>)
po<u>r</u>u + ē<u>ṛ</u>u > pō<u>rē</u>ṛu	(<i>ma<u>t</u>u.144</i>)
o<u>r</u>u + ok<u>k</u>um > ō<u>r</u>ok<u>k</u>um	(<i>pu<u>ṛ</u>a.189:6</i>)
o<u>r</u>u + o<u>r</u>u > ō<u>r</u>o<u>r</u>u	(<i>ka<u>l</u>i.141:7</i>)

5.7.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels and is an adjective. The following item is a suffix or a nominal. The stem-final vowel is deleted. Subsequently, one of the following changes occurs: the consonant preceding the stem-final vowel is doubled or hardened,³⁹ or the vowel *i* is inserted between the stem and the item following it. Consequently, the glide *y* is inserted between the *i* and the following item. In the case of the stem **mutu** ‘old’, another kind of change is possible: after the stem-final is deleted, the consonant preceding the deleted stem-final is doubled and the vowel in the first syllable is lengthened.

³⁹ See “Stem Mutation,” discussed above, for “hardening.” The word **munnil** ‘front porch’ can also be considered as derived by the hardening process: **mun** ‘front’ + **il** ‘place’ > **munnil** > **munnil**. However, for the hardening to be complete, the expected form is **muril**. See also Ḵampūraṇar’s commentary on Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Rule 356. Ḵampūraṇar says that the combination **mun** + **il** ought to result in **munnil**, but the consonant **r** is added to the stem “unnaturally.”

pacu + iṛā > paccirā	(peru:270)
pacu + ūṇ > paccūṇ	(peru:283)
neṭu + uruṭṭu > neṭṭuruṭṭu	(pari.18:42)
metu + eṇ > metten	(neṭu:37)
putu + akal > puttakal	(aka.86:8)
ciṛu + āṛṛu > ciṛṛāṛṛu	(kali.108:27)
ciṛu + il > ciṛṛil	(narr.123:8)
mutu + i + y + ōl > mutiyōl	(pura.277:2)
ciṛu + i + y + ilai > ciṛiyilai	(narr.64:5)
paru + i + y + arai > pariyarai	(peru:7)
peru + i + y + atu > periyatu⁴⁰	(kali.135:8)
mutu + ōr > mūttōr	(aka.90:1)

5.8.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels and is not an adjective. The following item is a nominalizing suffix or a noun. The stem-final vowel is deleted. The consonant preceding the stem-final is doubled or hardened.

puku ‘to enter’ + il ‘house’ > pukkil	(pura.221:6)
aṭu ‘to cook; kill’ + il ‘place’ > aṭṭil	(ciṛu:132)
toṭu + i > toṭṭi⁴¹	(pari.20:51)
cetu + ōr > cettōr⁴²	(pura.240:8)

⁴⁰ Some might derive **periyatu** from **periya** ‘big’ + **tu** PNG.

⁴¹ The modern Tamil word **toṭṭil** ‘cradle’ can also be explained by this process: < **toṭu** ‘to hook up’ + **il** ‘place.’

⁴² This derivation might seem unusual. Normally, the root of the word **cettōr** ‘carcasses; corpses; those who are dead’ is considered to be **cā**. But this study considers the stem to be **cetu** ‘to rot; lose life.’ Cf. **cetu kāl** ‘rotting/weakening post’ (aka.63:14); **cetu-k-kaṇ** ‘lifeless eyes’ (pura.261:9); **cetu moḷi** ‘cutting words of argument’ (kali.68:3).

ceṛu + am > ceṛṛam

(*matu*:490)

5.9.

The stem has two or more syllables. The disyllabic stem has a closed syllable and/or a long vowel. The following item is a nominalizing suffix or a word. The stem-final vowel is deleted. Subsequently, the consonant preceding the stem-final is doubled or hardened.⁴³

But if the stem is an adverbial participle or a verbal noun, an *i* is inserted between the stem and the following item.

ēku + arṛa > ēkkarṛa⁴⁴

(*aka*.39:24)

tuñcu ‘to sleep/rest’ + il ‘place’ > tuccil

(*paṭṭ*:58)

ōṭu + ai > ōṭṭai⁴⁵

(*pari*.12:51)

kuvaṭu + iṭaiyatu > kuvaṭṭiṭaiyatu

(*kuṛ*.179:7)

kōṭu + iṇattu > kōṭṭiṇattu

(*kali*.103:33)

kōṭu + ai > kōṭṭai⁴⁶

(*pari*.10:57)

pakaṭu + ilai > pakaṭṭilai

(*puṛ*.392:13)

pāṭu ‘to sing’ + i nominalizing suffix > pāṭṭi⁴⁷

(*aka*.196:4)

⁴³ Traditional commentators would normally refer to this process as a kind of hardening (*valittal vikāram*).

⁴⁴ An instance where the verb stem *ēku* ‘to leave’ is used to derive a verbal noun *ēkku* ‘leaving.’

⁴⁵ The word *ōṭṭai* is normally understood to mean ‘hole.’ This derivation might help one to understand how the word would have obtained the sense ‘hole’:

ōṭu ‘to run’ + *ai* verbal noun suffix

> *ōṭṭai* ‘that which lets something run/pass through’

⁴⁶ The word *kōṭṭai* is normally understood to mean ‘fortress.’ By this derivation, one could understand its basic sense as ‘that which is crooked/bent.’

kōṭu ‘to bend’ + *ai* verbal noun suffix > *kōṭṭai* ‘that which is bent’

⁴⁷ Cf. *pāṭṭiyar* < *pāṭṭi* ‘bardess’ + *y* (glide) + *ar* PNG (*matu*:749). It is possible also to derive *pāṭṭi* ‘bardess’ from *pāṇ* ‘bard’ + *ṭi* PNG. Note that the word *pāṭṭi* has come to

mōtu + a tirai > mōṭṭa tirai	(kali.131:38)
mōtu + iru varāal > mōṭṭiru varāal	(aka.196:2)
yāṇtu + oru kāl > yāṭṭoru kāl	(kali.71:26)
īntu + ilai > īṭṭilai	(peru.88)
vēntu + avai > vēṭṭavai	(malai.39)
vīru + irum koṟṟam > vīṟṟirum koṟṟam	(pati.59:9)
vēru + aracu > vēṟṟaacu	(puṟa.17:31)
vēru + ōr > vēṟṟōr	(puṟa.367:3)
nōṇpu + i + y (glide) + ar > nōṇpiyar	(narr.22:6)
venru + i + y (glide) + āṭiya > venṟiyāṭiya	(pati.40:12)

5.10.

The stem has more than two syllables. The following item is a suffix. The stem-final vowel is deleted and the initial vowel of the suffix following the stem is occasionally lengthened, if it is not already long.⁴⁸

innatu + ai > innatai	(narr.71:1)
ennatu + um > ennātūum	(puṟa.172:4)
enaiyatu + um > enaiyatūum	(narr.331:10)

5.11.

The stem has more than two syllables. The following item is a word, not a suffix. The resulting form is a nominal compound of the form verb-verbal noun.⁴⁹ The stem-final **u** is deleted. The initial

mean 'grandmother' in modern Tamil.

⁴⁸ Commentators on medieval Tamil grammars would refer to this process as **in-icai-aḷapeṭai** 'elongation for the sake of melody.' See "Lengthening of Sounds (**aḷapeṭai**) and Vowel Clusters."

⁴⁹ One could also say that these forms are of the structure: past stem + verbal noun. Alternatively stated, adverbial participles function as derived stems to which another verbal stem is added. The combination results in a nominal compound of the form verb-verbal

vowel of the item following the stem is lengthened if necessary to make it into a verbal noun.

pakuttu + uṇ > pakuttūṇ [Note that **uṇ** changed to **ūṇ**] (*pati.38:15*)

irantu + uṇ > irantūṇ [Note that **uṇ** changed to **ūṇ**] (*kuṛu.33:3*)

eṭuttu + ēru > eṭuttēru (*pati.41:23*)

5.12.

The stem has two or more syllables. The following item is a word or a suffix.

The stem-final vowel is deleted with the following condition applied to the disyllabic stem: the disyllabic stem should be a verb and the consonant preceding the final vowel should be **k**, **ṭ**, or **ṛ**.

When the stem-final is not deleted, the glide **v** is inserted between the stem and the following item.

piṛaṅku + attam > piṛaṅkattam (*kuṛu.66:2*)

vēṇṭu + annai > vēṇṭannai (*aiṅk.208:1*)

eṭu + aṭirō > eṭaṭirō (*puṛa.388:10*)

viṛaku + āka > viṛakāka (*puṛa.16:5*)

viḷaiyāṭu + āyamoṭu > viḷaiyāṭāyamoṭu (*narr.68:1*)

pāṭātu + āyiṇum > pāṭātāyiṇum (*puṛa.200:10*)

nalku + i > nalki (*poru.83*)

māṛu + iraṭṭum > māṛiraṭṭum (*aiṅk.450:1*)

ētu + ila > ētila (*narr.161:10*)

viṛaku + īmattu > viṛakīmattu (*puṛa.245:4*)

nukarku + ena > nukarkenā (*kuṛi.181*)

paṭu + um > paṭum (*narr.61:10*)

cūtu + uru > cūtu<u>r</u>u	<i>(matu.512)</i>
niṛaivu + u<u>r</u>a > niṛaivu<u>r</u>a	<i>(kali.146:43)</i>
viṛaku + oy mākkal > viṛakoy mākkal	<i>(pura.70:17)</i>
pa<u>ṭ</u>u 'well' + v + i<u>l</u> 'in' > pa<u>ṭ</u>uv<u>i</u>l	<i>(aka.79:3)</i>
e<u>l</u>u 'Rise!' + v + i<u>n</u>i 'now' > e<u>l</u>uv<u>i</u>ni	<i>(pura.207:1)</i>

5.13.

The stem has four syllables. The following item is a noun forming a compound with the stem. The stem-final vowel is deleted and the consonant preceding the stem-final vowel is doubled.

viḷaiyā<u>ṭ</u>u + āyam > viḷaiyā<u>ṭṭ</u>āyam	<i>(aka.230:6)</i>
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6. When a stem-final short vowel u is followed by a consonant-initial item:

6.1.

The stem is monosyllabic. The following item is a noun. The initial consonant of the following item is doubled.

u + k + karai > ukkarai	<i>(pura.357:9)</i>
u + p + pāl > uppāl	<i>(pari.11:8)</i>
u + v + varai > uvvarai	<i>(pati.78:2)</i>
mu + k + kaṇ > mukkaṇ	<i>(pura.6:18)</i>

6.2.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a suffix or a word.

When the consonant preceding the stem-final is **l** or **r**, the stem-final vowel preceding a suffix beginning with a single consonant is lengthened occasionally.

In the case of an adjectival stem in which the consonant preceding the stem-final vowel is **r**, the stem-final vowel is deleted and an

enunciative **i** is inserted between the stem and the following adjectival noun suffix. In other adjectival stems, a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the noun following the stem is inserted between the stem and the noun if the latter begins with **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

veru + tal > verūutal	(<i>kuri</i> :137)
oru + pa > orūupa	(<i>pati</i> .33:12)
e<u>l</u>u + ka > e<u>l</u>ūuka ‘make rise’	(<i>kali</i> .102:34)
ta<u>l</u>u + kam > ta<u>l</u>ūukam	(<i>narr</i> .50:3)
e<u>l</u>u + ka > e<u>l</u>uka ‘Rise!’	(<i>matu</i> :204)
vi<u>t</u>u + kam > vi<u>t</u>ukam	(<i>kuru</i> .106:6)
mu<u>l</u>u + tu > mu<u>l</u>utu	(<i>pati</i> .14:19)
ni<u>r</u>u + mi<u>n</u> > ni<u>r</u>umi<u>n</u>	(<i>puṛa</i> .152:14)
aru + i + tu > aritu	(<i>aiṅk</i> .235:2)
peru + i + tu > peritu	(<i>narr</i> .150:11)
peru + tta > perutta [no change]	(<i>puṛa</i> .177:14)
e<u>t</u>u + ppa > e<u>t</u>uppa [no change]	(<i>matu</i> :714)
ka<u>ṭ</u>u + ñ + celal > ka<u>ṭ</u>uñcelal	(<i>aka</i> .150:6)
ka<u>ṭ</u>u + m + pu<u>n</u>al > ka<u>ṭ</u>umpu<u>n</u>al	(<i>ne<u>t</u>u</i> :18)
ka<u>ṭ</u>u + nā<u>ḷ</u> > ka<u>ṭ</u>unā<u>ḷ</u> [no change]	(<i>kuru</i> .380:7)

6.3.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. In most cases, the consonant preceding the stem-final vowel is **r** or **l**. The following item is a noun. The stem-final vowel is lengthened in most cases. In any case, the initial consonant of the following noun is doubled, if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

kuru + k + ka<u>ṇ</u> > ku<u>r</u>ūukka<u>ṇ</u>	(<i>malai</i> :169)
ku<u>ḷ</u>u + k + ka<u>ḷ</u>iṛ<u>r</u>u > ku<u>ḷ</u>ūukka<u>ḷ</u>iṛ<u>r</u>u	(<i>puṛa</i> .97:9)
va<u>ḷ</u>u + c + col > va<u>ḷ</u>ūuccol	(<i>kali</i> .106:4)
paru + t + tiri > pa<u>r</u>ūuttiri	(<i>ne<u>t</u>u</i> :103)

kaṭippu iku + p + puṇ > kaṭippikūuppun	(<i>pati.40:3-4</i>)
kuru + p + puli > kurūuppuli	(<i>malai:517</i>)
paru + mayir > parūumayir	(<i>narr.98:1</i>)
muḷu + vaḷḷuram > muḷūuvaḷḷuram	(<i>pura.219:2</i>)
kuru + k + kaṇ > kurukkaṇ	(<i>kali.101:15</i>)
viḷu + t + toṭi > viḷuttoṭi	(<i>pati.81:10</i>)

6.4.

The stem has two open syllables with short vowels. The following item is a verb form or a nominal. The stem-final is not lengthened but the initial consonant of the following item is doubled in most cases, if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

kaṭu + k + kalittu eḷunta > kaṭukkalittu eḷunta	(<i>malai:14</i>)
cetu + k + kaṇ > cetukkaṇ	(<i>pura.261:9</i>)
tīru + k + kiḷar kōyil > tīrukkiḷar kōyil	(<i>poru:90</i>)
kuṟu + k + kai > kuṟukkai	(<i>aiṅk.266:2</i>)
ciṟu + k + kaṇ > ciṟukkaṇ	(<i>aiṅk.266:1</i>)
potu + k + koṇṭa > potukkoṇṭa	(<i>kali.66:11</i>)
maṟu + t + taral > maṟuttaral	(<i>kali.15:15</i>)
ciṟu + kaṇ > ciṟukaṇ	(<i>aiṅk.267:1</i>)
maṟu + taral > maṟutaral	(<i>aka.333:21</i>)
iṭu + tōrum > iṭutōrum	(<i>pati.21:11</i>)
putu + nāṟram > putunāṟram	(<i>pari.7:21</i>)
kaṭu + muṇai > kaṭumuṇai	(<i>aka.372:10</i>)
teṟu + vara > teṟuvara	(<i>narr.305:4</i>)

6.5.

The stem has two syllables with a long vowel or a closed syllable. The following item is a noun. The stem-final vowel is deleted. An enunciative **a** is inserted between the stem and the item following the stem after the stem-final is deleted. Subsequently, the word-initial

consonant of the noun following the stem is doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

vampu + a + p + patukkai > vampappatukkai (pura.3:21)
ūku + a + nuṅkōl > ūka nuṅkōl (pura.324:5)
vampu + a + māri > vampa māri (kuru.66:5)

6.6.

The stem has two or more syllables. The disyllabic stem has a closed syllable, whether it has a long vowel or not. The following item is a verb or a noun. The initial consonant of the following item is doubled, if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

puḷḷu + k + kural > puḷḷukkural (pura.385:1)
viṇṭu + c + cērnta > viṇṭuccērnta (pati.55:15)
villu + c + cori > villuccori (pari.18:40)
uvavu + t + talai > uvavuttalai (pura.65:6)
piṭavu + t + taḷai > piṭavuttaḷai (narr.246:8)
kāmpu + t + tī > kāmputtī (kali.150:3)
muḷavu + t + tōḷ > muḷavuttōḷ (pati.31:20)
vallu + p + pōr > valluppōr (pari.18:41)
vicumpu + mey āka > vicumpu mey āka (narr.ka.vā:3)

6.7.

The stem has two or more open syllables. The disyllabic stem has a long vowel or a closed syllable. The following item is a verb or a noun. The consonant preceding the stem-final is doubled or hardened if it is **k**, **c**, **ṭ**, **t**, **p**, or **r**.⁵⁰ Subsequently, the initial consonant of the following item also is doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

⁵⁰ Traditional grammarians would call this process a **valittal vikāram**.

veruku + p + pal > verukkuppal	<i>(kuru.240:3)</i>
āru + p + paṭuppa > āruppaṭuppa	<i>(cīru.39)</i>
kayīru + p + puṛattu > kayīruppuṛattu	<i>(aka.128:11)</i>
veruku + viṭai > verukkuviṭai	<i>(pura.324:1)</i>
añcu + vara > accuvara	<i>(pura.360:14)</i>
irumpu + mukam > iruppu mukam	<i>(pura.370:20)</i>

6.8.

The stem has two or more syllables. The following item is a nominal beginning with **y** or **p**. The stem-final vowel is deleted. The consonant preceding the stem-final is doubled or hardened if it is **k, c, ṭ, t, p,** or **r** and not already doubled or hardened. Subsequently, the initial consonant of the word following the stem is doubled if it is **p**. In the disyllabic adjectival stem, the vowel in the first syllable is occasionally lengthened instead of hardening the consonant preceding the deleted stem-final.

In all these cases, an enunciative **i** is inserted between the altered stem and the following item beginning with **y**; **ai** is inserted otherwise.⁵¹

ninakku + i + yān > ninakkiyān	<i>(pura.200:15)</i>
poruṭku + i + yān > poruṭkiyān	<i>(pura.208:6)</i>
pakaṭu + i + yānai > pakaṭṭiyānai	<i>(narr.381:7)</i>

⁵¹ The tradition does not have a name for such **ai** in these instances. But the **i** here is called a **kurriyal ikaram** 'extra-short i' and is considered as derived from the stem-final **u** which has its conventional name **kurriyal ukaram** 'extra-short u.' This traditional interpretation would not adequately explain cases like **putu + yānai > puttiyānai**, **cīru + yāru > cīriyāru**, and **veru + yāru** (given above), because the stem-final vowel **u** in **putu**, **cīru**, and **veru** is not a **kurriyal ukaram**. If one were to go by the tradition, one has to say that the stem first changes to ***puttu**, ***cīru**, and ***verru** making the stem-final become a **kurriyal ukaram** that ultimately changes to **i**, the **kurriyal ikaram**.

parukkōṭu + i + yāl > parukkōṭṭiyāl	(<i>pari.10:56</i>)
putu + i + yānai > puttiyānai	(<i>kali.97:7</i>)
ceṛittu + i + yān kaṭavaliṇ > ceṛittiyān kaṭavaliṇ	(<i>kuṛi:12</i>)
kaḷiru + i + yānai > kaḷirriyānai	(<i>pati.71:21</i>)
cīru + i + yārru > cīrriyārru	(<i>pura.260:22</i>)
veru + i + yārru > verriyārru	(<i>pura.261:4</i>)
cīru + i + yāl > cīriyāl	(<i>poru:109</i>)
pārāṭṭu + ai + p + pāl > pārāṭṭaippāl	(<i>kali.85:33</i>)
māṭu + ai + p + pāl > māṭṭaippāl	(<i>kali.85:36</i>)

6.9.

The stem has more than two syllables. The following item is a word, not a suffix. If the combination of the stem-final vowel and the preceding consonant is identical to the combination of the initial consonant and the following vowel in the word following the stem, one of these combinations is deleted as a process of haplology.

kaṭippu + puṭai > kaṭippuṭai	(<i>pati.84:1</i>)
kaṇāṅku + kural > kaṇāṅkural	(<i>aiṅk.452:2</i>)
taḷaṅku + kural > taḷaṅkural	(<i>aiṅk.448:1</i>)

7. When a stem-final consonant is followed by a vowel-initial item:

7.1.

The stem is monosyllabic with a short vowel. The stem-final consonant is neither **r** nor **l**. The following item is a suffix.

The stem-final consonant is doubled optionally. If it is doubled, the following changes occur subsequently: the suffix is added directly to the stem or an enunciative **i** is inserted between the altered adjectival stem and the suffix.

If the stem-final consonant is not doubled, then there are the following possibilities: the initial vowel of the suffix is lengthened for meter

unless it has more than two syllables or that the stem-final consonant is **v**; a glide, **v**, is inserted between the stem and the following suffix; an enunciative **i** is inserted between the stem and the following item.

tam + m + ōṇ > tammōṇ	(<i>narr.</i> 88:6)
pey + y + in + um > peyyinum	(<i>puṛa.</i> 105:4)
col + l + i > colli	(<i>narr.</i> 191:6)
nal + l + īr ē > nallīrē	(<i>aka.</i> 388:10)
val + l + ai > vallai	(<i>puṛa.</i> 27:17)
tev + v + ir > tevvir	(<i>puṛa.</i> 170:9)
mel + l + i + y (glide) + atu > melliyatu	(<i>kali.</i> 117:15)
uṇ + i > uṇīi	(<i>aiṅk.</i> 268:2)
nil + iyar > nilīiyar	(<i>puṛa.</i> 166:34)
koḷ + al > koḷāal	(<i>aka.</i> 47:10)
koḷ + i > koḷīi	(<i>poru.</i> 78)
teṇ + atu > teṇāatu	(<i>aka.</i> 198:13)
muṇ + atu > muṇāatu	(<i>kuṛu.</i> 34:4)
koḷ + al > koḷāl	(<i>pati.</i> 16:19)
taṇ + atu > taṇātu	(<i>narr.</i> 164:1)
muṇ + atu > muṇātu	(<i>kuṛu.</i> 11:4)
nil + iyarō > niliyarō [suffix has more than two syllables]	(<i>puṛa.</i> 2:20)
tev + i > tevi	(<i>pari.</i> 11:69)
kaḷ + v + i > kaḷvi ⁵²	(<i>kuṛu.</i> 312:1)
tam + i + y (glide) + aḷ > tamiyaḷ	(<i>aka.</i> 5:2)
val + i + y (glide) + ai > valiyai	(<i>pati.</i> 84:10)
in + i + y (glide) + ir > iniyir	(<i>malai.</i> 286)

⁵² Another possible derivation: **kaḷ + vi**.

tan + i + y (glide) + **ē** > **taniyē** (*narr.162:4*)

in + i + y (glide) + **ōn** > **iniyōn** (*puṛa.115:6*)

7.2.

The stem is monosyllabic with a short vowel and does not end with the consonant **r**. The following item is a nominal. The stem-final consonant is doubled.⁵³

num + **m** + **irai** > **nummirai** (*aka.388:26*)

vaḷ + **ḷ** + **ukir** > **vaḷḷukir** (*pati.12:4*)

tan + **ṇ** + **iyal** > **tanniyal** (*puṛa.25:2*)

pon + **ṇ** + **anna** > **ponnanna** (*puṛa.137:10*)

7.3.

The stem is a monosyllabic verb with a short vowel and ends with the consonant **r**: **tar** 'to give' or **var** 'to come.' The following item is a suffix beginning with a vowel.

The initial vowel of the following suffix is lengthened, if it is **i**. This change is occasional when the initial vowel of the suffix is **u**.

The stem changes according to different suffixes. The vowel in the stem is certainly lengthened when the suffix following the stem begins with a short vowel and signifies negation. The vowel in the stem is occasionally lengthened when the suffix following the stem begins with a long vowel. When the suffix is the imperative **um**, the vowel in the stem is lengthened or the initial vowel of the suffix **u** is deleted subsequently allowing for the stem-final **r** to coalesce with the remaining part (**m**) of the suffix.

⁵³ The doubling of the stem-final consonant in instances like **īṭallē** < **īṭal** + **ē** (*puṛa.123:2*) and **ōmpallē** < **ōmpal** + **ē** (*kuṛu.294:8*), where the stem does have a long vowel, arises when there is a metrical requirement. See "Lengthening of Sounds (**aḷapeṭai**) and Vowel Clusters" on metrical requirement.

tar + i > tarii	(<i>ciru</i> :260)
tar + iya > tariiya	(<i>aka</i> .3:4)
tar + um > tarum	(<i>aka</i> .77:19)
tar + um > tarūum	(<i>malai</i> :170)
var + um > varum	(<i>narṛ</i> .53:7)
var + um > varūum	(<i>narṛ</i> .37:11)
tar + al > taral	(<i>kuru</i> .254:6)
tar + al (negative) > tāral	(<i>kuru</i> .258:1)
var + al > varal	(<i>ciru</i> :3)
var + al (negative) > vāral	(<i>aka</i> .92:5)
tar + āy > tārāy (positive)	(<i>aka</i> .165:8)
tar + ā (negative) + ar > tarāar	(<i>pati</i> .71:21)
[or tar + ār > tarāar]	
var + um > vārum	(<i>pari</i> .14:9)
tar + um > tam	(<i>pati</i> .85:4)
var + um > vam	(<i>poru</i> :101)

7.4.

The stem has one or more syllables. The following item is a suffix or a word. The monosyllabic stem has a long vowel. If the stem-final consonant is not **m**, it is joined to the initial vowel of the item following the stem without any change.

The stem-final consonant **m** becomes **tt** if the stem has more than one syllable and the item following the stem is a suffix.⁵⁴ However, this change is optional when the first syllable of the stem is closed.

uriñ + a > uriña	(<i>aka</i> .167:12)
nāṇ + in + al > nāṇinal	(<i>narṛ</i> .308:3)

⁵⁴ Traditional grammarians would say that there is an augment, **attu**, between the stem and the following item in such situations. Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 186.

verin + in > verinin	(<i>narr.25:1</i>)
vāy + aḷ > vāyaḷ	(<i>tiru.56</i>)
ūr + ēm > ūrēm	(<i>narr.220:7</i>)
vēl + iṭṭu > vēliṭṭu	(<i>pati.46:11</i>)
urul + ilāy > uruḷilāy	(<i>kali.59:14</i>)
maram + a > maratta	(<i>paṭṭ.59</i>)
vēḷam + ai > vēḷattai	(<i>kali.97:20</i>)
neñcam + oṭu > neñcamoṭu	(<i>kuṟu.290:4</i>)
neñcam + ōṇ > neñcattōṇ	(<i>pura.377:6</i>)
iruntaṇam + āka > iruntaṇamāka	(<i>aka.388:9</i>)
kāṇēm + āyiṇ > kāṇēmāyiṇ	(<i>kuṟu.290:3</i>)

8. When a stem-final consonant is followed by a consonant-initial item:

8.1.

The stem ends with the consonant **n** or **v**. The following item is a verb form or a noun.

If the stem-final consonant is **n** and the following item is a noun, the vowel **a** is inserted between the stem and the noun. The vowel **u** is inserted if the item following the stem-final **n** is not a noun. Subsequently, the initial consonant of the following item is doubled in both cases.

If the stem-final consonant is **v**, it becomes identical to the initial consonant of the following item.

verin + a + t + tōl > verinattōl	(<i>pari.21:5</i>)
verin + u + c + cenranna > verinuccenranna	(<i>aka.65:14</i>)
tev + muṇai > temmuṇai	(<i>pati.80:17</i>)

8.2.

The stem ends with the consonant **m** and is a nominal, but not an adjective. The following item is a suffix or a nominal.

When the stem refers to a tree and the following item is a word forming a nominal compound with the stem, the stem-final consonant is deleted and subsequently the initial consonant of the item following the stem is doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**. If there is no resulting compound, the stem-final would change into a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the following word.

If the stem is the oblique form of a pronoun and the following item is a case suffix, an enunciative **a** is inserted between the stem and the suffix. The final consonant of the pronominal stem changes into a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the following word if the latter is not a duplicate of the stem and begins with **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**. If the word following the oblique pronoun stem is a duplicate of the stem, the stem-final consonant is deleted and the initial consonant of the following word is doubled.

In other stems, the following changes are possible. The stem-final **m** could become **tt** in non-monosyllabic stems if the first syllable is not closed and if the item following the stem refers to a part of what the stem refers to as a whole. Subsequently, an enunciative **u** is inserted between the stem and the following item, and the initial consonant **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p** of the latter is doubled. In other cases, the stem-final **m** is deleted and the initial consonant of the item following the stem is doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

When the item following the stem begins with **y**, an enunciative **i** is inserted between the stem and the following item.

maram 'tree' + **k** + **kompu** 'branch' > **marakkompu** (*aka.345:13*)
maram 'tree' + **talai** > **marantalai** (*puṛa.371:2*)
yām + **taṇakku** uṛumuṛai > **yāntaṇakku** uṛumuṛai (*puṛa.292:2*)
um + **a** + **kku** > **umakku** (*pari.20:84*)
tam + **kuṭi** > **taṇkuṭi** (*pati.81:13*)

em + kōmān > eṅkōmān	(<i>puṛa.95:9</i>)
em + pati > empati	(<i>aka.200:6</i>)
em + varai aḷavai > emvarai aḷavai	(<i>aka.200:13</i>)
tam + muṇ > tammuṇ	(<i>pari.15:19</i>)
tam + nāṭṭu > tam nāṭṭu	(<i>narr.183:1</i>)
num + nukam > nunnukam	(<i>pati.63:15</i>)
tam + tam > tattam	(<i>pari.22:44</i>)
aṇam + kai > aṇattukkai	(<i>pari.20:105</i>)
araiyam + kēṭu > araiyattukkēṭu	(<i>puṛa.202:8</i>)
kāṇam + kākkai > kāṇakkākkai	(<i>puṛa.342:1</i>)
kuḷam + kīl > kuḷakkīl	(<i>puṛa.33:5</i>)
kunram + kīl > kunrakkīl ⁵⁵	(<i>pari.19:36</i>)
kaṇam + ku > kaṇakku	(<i>pari.19:39</i>)
paḷam ‘fruit’ + cuḷai > paḷaccuḷai	(<i>aka.288:13</i>)
koṛram + tiru > koṛrattiru	(<i>pati.90:24</i>)
ciṇam + pōr > ciṇappōr	(<i>pati.77:1</i>)
nilam + makaḷ > nilamakaḷ	(<i>puṛa.365:10</i>)
curam + mutal > curamutal	(<i>puṛa.60:4</i>)
nilam + varai > nilavarai	(<i>narr.399:5</i>)
koṛram + vēntar > koṛravēntar	(<i>puṛa.338:8</i>)
aṇaiyam + i + yām > aṇaiyamiyām	(<i>aiṅk.70:5</i>)

8.3.

The stem ends with the consonant **m**, and is not an adjective. The following item is a word, not a suffix. Either the stem or the following word is a verb form.

If the stem is not a pronoun, the stem-final **m** becomes a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of the following item.

⁵⁵ According to traditional grammarians, there is a deletion of the so called **cāriyai** “augment” **akku** in such instances: **kunram + akku + kīl** > **kunrakkīl**. Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 129.

If the stem is a pronoun, the stem-final **m** is deleted and the initial consonant of the following verb is doubled if it is **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**.

In either case, the stem-final **m** is deleted when the stem is non-monosyllabic or has a long vowel and the following item begins with a nasal.

kayam + kalañki > kayañkalañki	<i>(pura.283:1)</i>
vem + kātali > veñkātali	<i>(pura.210:5)</i>
valam + tiri maruppu > valantiri maruppu	<i>(aka.304:9)</i>
nam + tuṟantu > nattuṟantu	<i>(aka.183:3)</i>
nam + puṇarntu > nappuṇarntu	<i>(aka.311:5)</i>
attam + naṇṇiya > atta naṇṇiya	<i>(pura.313:1)</i>
makaram + mēva > makara mēva	<i>(pari.11:9)</i>
kalam + mikuppa > kalamikuppa	<i>(pura.161:30)</i>
yām + makiltūñka > yāmakiltūñka	<i>(pura.316:10)</i>
yām + vēṇṭiyāñku > yām vēṇṭiyāñku	<i>(pura.171:5)</i>

8.4.

The stem ends with the consonant **m**, and is an adjective.⁵⁶ The following item is a word. The stem-final **m** changes to **v** if the following word begins with **v**. If the word following the stem begins with **k**, **c**, or **t**, the stem-final **m** changes to a nasal homorganic with the initial consonant of that word. Otherwise, there is no change.

am + vari > avvari	<i>(narr.370:5)</i>
am + kavaṭu > aṅkavaṭu	<i>(pati.23:1)</i>

⁵⁶ Some might consider adjectival stems such as **tī** ‘sweet’, **pū** ‘soft’, **tē** ‘sweet’, and **ai** ‘subtle, soft’ as ending with an **m** and so to follow the process described here.

8.5.

The stem ends with the consonant **ṇ**, **l**, **ḷ**, or **ṅ** and is not an adjective. The following item is a suffix or a word. Changes may occur in the stem-final consonant and/or the initial consonant of the item following the stem.

The stem-final consonant changes into its corresponding hard sound when the initial consonant of the item following the stem begins with **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**. Thus, **ṇ** > **ṭ**; **l** > **ṛ**; **ḷ** > **ṭ**; and **ṅ** > **ṛ**. In these cases, there is no change in the initial consonant of the item following the stem.

When the initial consonant of the item following the stem is **t** or **n** the situation can be complex. Basically, **t** and **n** assimilate to the tongue position of the stem-final consonant and change their point of articulation according to the point of articulation of the stem-final, so **t** > **ṭ** and **n** > **ṇ** when the stem-final is **ḷ** or **ṇ**; **t** > **ṛ** and **n** > **ṅ** when the stem-final is **l** or **ṅ**. The following happen concurrently:

The stem-final nasal (**ṇ** or **ṅ**) may remain unchanged.

The non-nasal stem-final consonant changes into its corresponding nasal, whereas the stem-final nasal consonant changes into its corresponding hard consonant. Thus, stem-final **l** > **ṅ**; **ḷ** > **ṇ**; **ṇ** > **ṭ**; and **ṅ** > **ṛ**.

The non-nasal stem-final consonant changes into a hard consonant: **l** > **ṛ**; **ḷ** > **ṭ**.

Rarely, the non-nasal stem-final consonant (**l** or **ḷ**) becomes the **āytam** (**ḥ**) after changing the initial consonant **t** of the following item respectively to **ṛ** and **ṭ**. The stem in this situation is monosyllabic with a short vowel.

Sometimes, the stem-final consonant is deleted after changing the following item into a non-āytam. When this change occurs in a monosyllabic stem with a short vowel, the vowel is lengthened.

If none of the above changes occurs, an enunciative vowel is inserted optionally between the stem and the following item. The enunciative vowel is **a** if the stem is a pronoun, and **u** if the item following the stem does not begin with **y**. If the item following the stem begins with **y**, the enunciative vowel inserted is **i**. The stem-final consonant in the monosyllabic stem with a short vowel is doubled. The initial hard consonant (**k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**) of the following suffix is doubled if it is a case marker or a word following a monosyllabic stem.

kaṇ + ku > kaṭku [ṇ changed to ṭ]	(<i>kuṛu.202:3</i>)
naṭuvaṇ + cilaippa > naṭuvaṭcilaippa [ṇ changed to ṭ]	(<i>pati.54:13</i>)
cēṇ + pulam > cēṭpulam [ṇ changed to ṭ]	(<i>aka.390:2</i>)
muraṇ + pū > muraṭpū [ṇ changed to ṭ]	(<i>peru.294</i>)
māṇ + t + aṇ + a > māṇṭana [t changed to ṭ]	(<i>pati.19:27</i>)
kāṇ + t + ī > kaṇṭī [t changed to ṭ; stem vowel changed]	(<i>pari.6:64</i>)
kāṇ + t + ir > kāṇṭir [t changed to ṭ]	(<i>aka.76:9</i>)
viṇ + tōy piṛaṅkal > viṇṭōy piṛaṅkal [t changed to ṭ]	(<i>puṛa.391:2</i>)
kaṇ + nīr > kaṇṭīr [n changed to ṇ]	(<i>naṛr.88:8</i>)
kaṇ + tu > kaṭṭu [ṇ changed to ṭ; t changed to ṭ]	(<i>puṛa.203:10</i>)
tūṇ + taṭi > tūṭṭaṭi [ṇ changed to ṭ; t changed to ṭ]	(<i>pari.4:20</i>)
puṇ + tāl > puṭṭāl [ṇ changed to ṭ; t changed to ṭ]	(<i>aka.120:10</i>)
māṇ + nalam > māṇalam [n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]	(<i>aiṅk.139:2</i>)
avaṇ + ninrum > avaṇinrum [n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]	(<i>malai.53</i>)
kaṇ + u + kku > kaṇṇukku [enunciative u]	(<i>puṛa.167:7</i>)

eṇ + u + ti > eṇṇuti [enunciative u]	(<i>kuṛu.63:2</i>)
pēṇ + u + pa > pēṇupa [enunciative u]	(<i>naṛṛ.72:1</i>)
eṇ + u + pa > eṇṇupa [enunciative u]	(<i>puṛa.116:8</i>)
nāṇ + u + k + kuṛaivilaḷ > nāṇukkuṛaivilaḷ [enunciative u]	(<i>paṛi.12:49</i>)
pūṇ + ka > pūṇka [no change]	(<i>naṛṛ.81:5</i>)
kāṇ + mati > kāṇmati [no change]	(<i>aiṇk.134:1</i>)
uṇ + miṇ > uṇmiṇ [no change]	(<i>paṭi.18:1</i>)
kal + pu > karpu [l changed to r]	(<i>paṭi.70:15</i>)
kaṭal + karai > kaṭarṭkarai [l changed to r]	(<i>aiṇk.168:1</i>)
kaṭal + paṭappai > kaṭarṭpaṭappai [l changed to r]	(<i>paṭi.55:6</i>)
cel + t + aṇ + a > cenṛana [l changed to n; t changed to r]	(<i>aka.251:1</i>)
cel + t + ī > cenṛī [l changed to n; t changed to r]	(<i>naṛṛ.360:5</i>)
niḷ + t + ī + mō > niṇṛīmō [l changed to n; t changed to r]	(<i>naṛṛ.45:8</i>)
vel + ti > venṛi [l changed to n; t changed to r]	(<i>kuṛu.111:2</i>)
nal + nāṭṭu > nannāṭṭu [l changed to n; n changed to ṇ]	(<i>paṭi.55:6</i>)
cel + mati > cenṛmati [l changed to n]	(<i>aka.288:1</i>)
kal + mār > kaṇmār [l changed to n]	(<i>puṛa.169:9</i>)
vēl + miḷai > vēṇmiḷai [l changed to n]	(<i>paṭi.33:7</i>)
vel + vēl > venṛvēl [l changed to n]	(<i>puṛa.201:18</i>)
vel + ti > verṛi [l changed to r; t changed to r]	(<i>tiru.258</i>)
kal + t + u > karṛu [l changed to r; t changed to r]	(<i>matu.767</i>)
[Some might prefer kal + tt + u]	
niḷ + tara > niṛṛara [l changed to r; t changed to r]	(<i>matu.522</i>)
kaṭal + tirai > kaṭarṛirai [l changed to r; t changed to r]	(<i>aiṇk.105:1-2</i>)
pal + ti > paḥṛi [l changed to ḥ; t changed to r]	(<i>paṭṭi.30</i>)
kol + takai > koḥṛakai [l changed to ḥ; t changed to r]	(<i>paṛi.5:6</i>)
pal + tōl > paḥṛōl [l changed to ḥ; t changed to r]	(<i>paṭi.83:3</i>)

uḷal + tal > uḷaral	(aka.208:12)
[t changed to r; stem-final is deleted]	
kuyil + nar > kuyinar	(matu.511)
[n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]	
varampil + tānai > varampiṛānai	(pati.29:15)
[t changed to r; stem-final is deleted]	
iyal + tēr > iyaṛēr	(aiṅk.104:3)
[t changed to r; stem-final is deleted]	
vāl + narai > vānarai	(pura.277:2)
[n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]	
kurucil + nī > kuruciṇī	(pati.32:1)
[n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]	
vel + tal > vēral	(pura.45:6)
[t changed to r; stem-final is deleted; stem vowel is lengthened]	
cel + ti > cēri	(narr.19:7)
[t changed to r; stem-final is deleted; stem vowel is lengthened]	
col + u + mati > collumati [enunciative u]	(aiṅk.479:1)
eḷil + i + yānai > eḷiliyānai [enunciative i]	(pari.20:4)
cel + ka > celka [no change]	(poru.177)
cel + pa > celpa [no change]	(narr.73:6)
ivaḷ + ku > ivaṭku [ḷ changed to ṭ]	(aiṅk.103:3)
taḷ + pa > taṭpa [ḷ changed to ṭ]	(narr.94:3)
peḷ + pu > peṭpu [ḷ changed to ṭ]	(pura.205:2)
vēḷ + kōccirāar > vēṭkōccirāar [ḷ changed to ṭ]	(pura.32:8)
puḷ + pakai > puṭpakai [ḷ changed to ṭ]	(pura.68:11)
koḷ + t + u > koṇṭu [ḷ changed to ṇ; t changed to ṭ]	(pura.201:7)
koḷ + t + ī > koṇṭī [ḷ changed to ṇ; t changed to ṭ]	(kali.65:14)
nāḷ + makiḷ irukkai > nāṇmakiḷ irukkai	(pati.85:8)
[ḷ changed to ṇ]	
koḷ + mati > koṇmati [ḷ changed to ṇ]	(pura.200:15)
kēḷ + t + i > kēṭṭī [ḷ changed to ṭ; t changed to ṭ]	(aka.68:4)

muḷ + tāḷ + tāmarai > muṭṭāṭṭāmarai (*kuṛi.80*)

[ḷ changed to ṭ; t changed to ṭ]

kaḷ + tu > kaḥṭu [ḷ changed to ḥ; t changed to ṭ] (*puṛa.319:4*)

āḷ + tal > āṭal [t changed to ṭ; stem-final is deleted] (*pati.75:14*)

nāḷ + torum > nātorum (*pati.54:7*)

[t changed to ṭ; stem-final is deleted]

taṭantāḷ + nārai > taṭantāṇārai (*pati.29:4*)

[n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]

puḷ + u + k + kural > puḷḷukkural [enunciative u] (*puṛa.41:7*)

eṇ + ku > eṛku [ṇ changed to ṛ] (*puṛa.303:9*)

kāṇiṇ + kāṭalantōḷi > kāṇiṛkāṭalantōḷi (*aka.352:11*)

[ṇ changed to ṛ]

niṇ vayiṇ + pirinta > niṇvayiṛpirinta [ṇ changed to ṛ] (*pati.79:4*)

taṇ + puṛam > tarpuṛam [n changed to ṛ] (*puṛa.383:13*)

eṇ + ti > eṇri [t changed to ṛ] (*aka.370:7*)

tiṇ + ti > tiṇri [t changed to ṛ] (*kali.65:13*)

āṇ + t + u > āṇru [t changed to ṛ] (*kuṛu.155:3*)

tiṇ + t + u > tiṇru [t changed to ṛ] (*poru.118*)

mun + tiṇai > munriṇai [t changed to ṛ] (*pati.85:5*)

cevvūṇ + tōṇrā > cevvūṇrōṇrā [t changed to ṛ] (*pati.55:7*)

poṇ + nēr > poṇnēr [n changed to ṇ] (*aka.229:13*)

eṇ + tuyar > eṇruyar [ṇ changed to ṛ; t changed to ṛ] (*pari.8:78*)

pulampan + tēri > pulamparrēri (*aink.166:3*)

[ṇ changed to ṛ; t changed to ṛ]

niḷan + neḷiya > niḷaneḷiya (*puṛa.345:6*)

[n changed to ṇ; stem-final is deleted]

eṇ + a + (k)ku > eṇakku [enunciative a] (*narr.128:3*)

niṇ + a + (k)ku > niṇakku [enunciative a] (*pati.73:2*)

taṇ + a + (k)ku > taṇakku [enunciative a] (*aka.32:18*)

maṇ + u + ka > manṇuka [enunciative u] (*puṛa.91:7*)

tun + u + kam > tunṇukam [enunciative u] (*aka.154:15*)

miṇ + u + p + pōl > miṇnuppōl [enunciative u] (*pari.21:54*)

ivan + **i** + **yār** > **ivaniyār** [enunciative **i**] (*pura.13:1*)
kān + **yāru** > **kānyāru** [no enunciative **i**] (*paṭṭ:161*)

8.6.

The stem ends with the consonant **ṇ**, **l**, **ḷ**, or **n** and is an adjective. The following item is a suffix or a word.

The stem-final consonant may change. They change into their corresponding hard sounds or nasals when the following item begins with **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**, but change into a corresponding nasal when the initial consonant of the following item is a nasal. Thus, **ṇ** > **ṭ**; **l** > **r** or **n**; **ḷ** > **ṭ** or **ṇ**.

If the initial consonant of the word following the stem is a dental (**t** or **n**), it assimilates to the tongue position of the stem-final. Thus, **t** > **ṭ** following a stem-final **ṇ**, but becomes **r** following a stem-final **n**; **n** > **ṇ** following a stem-final **ṇ**, but becomes **n** following a stem-final **l**. And, when **t/n** changes in that manner, corresponding change in the stem-final described in the preceding paragraph is obligatory.

Sometimes, the stem-final is deleted after changing the initial consonant of the item following it. The stem found in this situation is either non-monosyllabic or has a long vowel in its first syllable.

If none of the above changes occurs, an enunciative vowel **i** or **ai** is inserted between the stem and the following word. Consequently, the stem-final consonant in the monosyllabic stem is doubled optionally as well as the initial consonant (**k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**) of the following word if the resultant form is a nominal.

tiṇ + **p(u)** + **am** > **tiṭpam** (verbal noun) (*aka.195:15*)
 [**ṇ** changed to **ṭ**]
tiṇ + **tēr** > **tiṇṭēr** [**t** changed to **ṭ**] (*aink.137:2*)
taṇ + **niḷal** > **taṇṇiḷal** [**n** changed to **ṇ**] (*kuṛi:106*)
taṇ + **kaṭal** > **taṇkaṭal** [no change] (*peru:18*)

tiṇ + cuvar > tiṇcuvar [no change]	(<i>matu</i> :667)
taṇ + porunai > taṇporunai [no change]	(<i>puṛa</i> .11:5)
taṇ + i + tu > taṇṇitu [enunciative i]	(<i>aka</i> .218:15)
cil + cila > ciṛcila [l changed to ṛ]	(<i>puṛa</i> .331:9)
cil + mīn > ciṇmīn [l changed to ṇ]	(<i>puṛa</i> .348:3-4)
nal + tu > naṇru [l changed to ṇ; t changed to ṛ]	(<i>kuṛu</i> .38:4)
mel + nōkku > menṇōkku	(<i>kali</i> .86:23)
[l changed to ṇ; n changed to ṇ]	
akal + i + tu > akalitu [enunciative i]	(<i>puṛa</i> .256:6)
nal + l + i + tu > nallitu [enunciative i]	(<i>malai</i> :80)
mel + l + i + tu > mellitu [enunciative i]	(<i>matu</i> :419)
nal + l + i + yāl > nalliyāl [enunciative i]	(<i>malai</i> :450)
tol + kaviṇ > tol + kaviṇ [no change]	(<i>narr</i> .14:1)
nal + yāl > nalyāl [no change]	(<i>malai</i> :381)
veḷ + kuṭai > veṇkuṭai [l changed to ṇ]	(<i>ciṛu</i> :64)
vaḷ + kai > vaṇkai [[l changed to ṇ]	(<i>matu</i> :442)
veḷ + nari > veṇṇari	(<i>pati</i> .22:34)
[l changed to ṇ; n changed to ṇ]	
vāl + nutal > vāṇutal	(<i>pati</i> .19:14)
[n changed to ṇ; stem-final deleted]	
veḷ + i + tu > veḷitu [enunciative i]	(<i>puṛa</i> .279:8)
veḷ + ai + t + tōṭu > veḷḷaittōṭu [enunciative ai]	(<i>kuṛu</i> .163:2)
veḷ + yāṭṭu > veḷ yāṭṭu [no change]	(<i>pari</i> .5:62)
iṇ + tuṇai > iṇruṇai [t changed to ṛ]	(<i>aka</i> .352:7)
iṇ + nakai > iṇṇakai [n changed to ṇ]	(<i>narr</i> .81:9)
iṇ + cīr > iṇcīr [no change]	(<i>narr</i> .138:10)

8.7.

The stem is monosyllabic and ends with the consonant **r**, but is not an adjective: **tar** 'to give' and **var** 'to come.' The following item is a suffix beginning with a consonant. An enunciative **u** is inserted between the stem and the following suffix when the suffix begins with **k**, **t**, or **p**. But, the stem-final **r** is changed into a nasal homorganic

with the initial consonant of the following suffix when the latter is the past/completive marker **t** or when it begins with a nasal.

tar + u + kam > tarukam	(<i>aka.21:8</i>)
tar + u + ti > taruti	(<i>aka.188:14</i>)
var + u + nar > varunar	(<i>kuṛi.202</i>)
tar + u + pa > tarupa	(<i>pati.59:12</i>)
var + t + u > vantu	(<i>narr.229:11</i>)
tar + t + u > tantu	(<i>matu.766</i>)
tar + min > tammin	(<i>matu.729</i>)
tar + min > tamin	(<i>pura.152:18</i>)
var + min > vamin	(<i>pati.49:1</i>)
var + mō > vammō	(<i>pura.180:9</i>)

8.8.

The stem is monosyllabic, ends with the consonant **r**, and is an adjective. The following item is a word. A nasal homorganic with the initial consonant **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p** of the word following the stem is inserted between the stem and the following word beginning with a nasal. If this change does not occur, an enunciative **a** is inserted between the stem and the following item. Consequently, the initial **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p** of the word following the stem is doubled.

īr + n + kaḷai > īrñkaḷai	(<i>malai.207</i>)
īr + ñ + cuval > īrñcuval	(<i>aka.133:16</i>)
īr + n + taṭi > īrntaṭi	(<i>narr.120:5</i>)
īr + m + purattu > īrmpurattu	(<i>narr.87:7</i>)
īr + ñeṇṭu > īrñeṇṭu	(<i>kuṛu.117:2</i>)
īr + a + c + ceṛu > īracceṛu⁵⁷	(<i>pura.369:10</i>)

⁵⁷ Some might derive this form from **īram + ceṛu**.

8.9.

The stem ends with the consonant **y**, **r**, or **l** and is not an adjective. The stem ending with **r** or **l** has a long vowel or at least two syllables. The following item is a suffix or a word.

The initial consonant of the item following the stem is doubled under the following circumstances: the item following the stem is a noun; the stem and the following item bear a case-relation. If the suffix following the stem begins with **m**, this doubling is occasional. An enunciative **i** is inserted between the stem ending with **r** and the following word when the latter begins with **y**. There is no change otherwise.⁵⁸

mey + k + kalavai	(<i>pari</i> .7:20)
tuy + t + talai manti	(<i>puṛa</i> .158:24)
eṛuḷ + t + tōḷ	(<i>matu</i> .729)
vāy + p + pakai	(<i>aka</i> .101:6)
kīḷ + p + paṇintu	(<i>pati</i> .75:4)
koy + m + mayir	(<i>naṛṛ</i> .81:4)
kūṭunar + p + piriyaḷaṇ	(<i>aka</i> .352:8)
amarar + p + pēṇi	(<i>puṛa</i> .99:1)
cey + m + mār (infinitive suffix)	(<i>pati</i> .54:14)
cēr + miṇ (imperative suffix)	(<i>puṛa</i> .9:5)
vīḷ + miṇ	(<i>puṛa</i> .262:1)
imiḷ + marutiṇ	(<i>pati</i> .13:7)
ivar + i + yār	(<i>puṛa</i> .201:1)
tantār + i + yār	(<i>kali</i> .84:32)
cey + t + u	(<i>matu</i> .371)

⁵⁸ The form **cōṇāṭu** 'the Cōḷa country' (cf. *paṭṭ*.28) is derived thus: **cōḷa + nāṭu**. First, the stem-final **a** is deleted. Then, the resulting stem-final **ḷ** changes the following **n** to **ṇ** and is elided subsequently. See 8.5 above for similar processes.

kāy + tal > kāy ₁ tal	(pura.258:11)
kāy + tt + u > kāy ₁ ttu	(pura.120:8)
cēy + ttu > cēy ₁ ttu	(cīru:202)
vāy + puku kaṭāam > vāy ₁ puku kaṭāam	(aka.93:17)
cēr + kam > cēr ₁ kam	(pura.255:6)
puṇar + cci > puṇar ₁ cci	(kuri:212)
ār + na > ār ₁ na	(pati.13:6)
āl + ka > āl ₁ ka	(pura.132:2)
āl + cci > āl ₁ cci	(pura.60:8)
pīra ₁ l + na > pīra ₁ l ₁ na	(pati.13:1)

THEORY OF CLASSICAL TAMIL POETRY

GENERAL: The basic term that refers to Tamil meter is **pā**, which refers to a poem by metonymy. These poems have a limit (**aḷavu**) on the number of their lines and each line is called an **aṭi** which is made up of a certain number of metrical feet known as the **cīr**. Each **cīr** is composed of a certain number of basic metrical units called **acai** which are made up of letters (vowels and consonants) known by the generic term **eḷuttu**. Each **eḷuttu** is perceived to have certain intrinsic length/duration, which is known by the term **māttirai**.

In addition to the above components which might here be referred to as the core structural components of a Tamil poem, there are certain other structural components and content-related components to look for, because they impart aesthetic beauty (**vanappu**) to the poem. They are “stringing” or alliteration (**toṭai**), “wrapping” or the connection between the beginning and the end of a poem (**māṭṭu**), rhythmic effect (**vaṇṇam**), serenity (**ammai**), beauty (**aḷaku**), antiquity (**tonmai**), elegance (**tōl**), novelty (**viruntu**), and the choice of letters, words, and line length (**iyaipu**, **pulan**, and **ilaipu**).

With regard to the substance of the poem, the features to look for are perspective (**nōkku**), themes concerning emotions, sentiments, and norms (**tiṇai** and **kaikōl**), *dramatis personae* and their statements (**kētpōr** and **kūrṟu**), context and time (**kaḷaṇ** and **kālam**), results of the theme of the composition (**payaṇ** and **meypṇāṭu**), assumption of poetic conventions and inference (**munṇam** and **eccam**), and conforming to and deviation from the norm (**tuṟai** and **poruḷ vakai**).

Finally, the processes underlying the composition of a poem are known as composing a poem (**yāppu**) following the established conventions (**marapu**) and the process of evaluation (**tūkku**). All these features are discussed in the following pages, and some poems are scanned at the end.

Traditional Approach to a Tamil Poem

Traditional erudite Tamil poets (**pulavar**) consider the above introduced features as “limbs” of a Tamil poem, and provide the technical rubric for these 34 features as **uṟuppu** ‘limb(s).’ The technical names for these components are **māttirai**, **eḷuttu**, **acai**, **cīr**, **aṭi**, **yāppu**, **marapu**, **tūkku**, **toṭai**, **nōkku**, **pā**, **aḷavu**, **tiṇai**, **kaikōl**, **kūrṟu**, **kētpōr**, **kaḷaṇ**, **kālam**, **payāṇ**, **meypṇāṭu**, **eccam**, **munṇam**, **poruḷ**, **tuṟai**, **māṭṭu**, **vaṇṇam**, **ammai**, **aḷaku**, **tonmai**, **tōl**, **viruntu**, **iyaipu**, **pulaṇ**, and **īḷaipu**. Among them, the last eight (**ammai**, **aḷaku**, **tonmai**, **tōl**, **viruntu**, **iyaipu**, **pulaṇ**, and **īḷaipu**) are applicable to long narrative poetry, whereas the rest are attributable to a compilation (like anthology) as well as to an individual poem.

From another perspective, **eḷuttu**, **māttirai**, **acai**, **cīr**, **aṭi**, **yāppu**, **tūkku**, **toṭai**, **pā**, **aḷavu**, **māṭṭu**, **vaṇṇam**, **iyaipu**, and **īḷaipu** are the fourteen components pertaining to the prosodic structure of Tamil poetry. Those which relate to the subject matter are the following nineteen: **nōkku**, **tiṇai**, **kaikōl**, **kūrṟu**, **kētpōr**, **kaḷaṇ**, **kālam**, **payāṇ**, **meypṇāṭu**, **eccam**, **munṇam**, **poruḷ**, **tuṟai**, **ammai**, **aḷaku**, **tonmai**, **tōl**, **viruntu**, and **pulaṇ**. The component called **marapu** “con-

vention” is common to the form as well as the subject matter of Tamil poetry.¹

For the purposes of this study, the 34 components mentioned above are discussed below in two major sections: prosodic components and components of subject matter.²

Prosodic Components

One could make a further division of the fourteen items which are specifically applicable to the prosodic structure of Tamil poetry and this would result in three categories of these prosodic components as core structural components (**eluttu**, **māttirai**, **acai**, **cīr**, **aṭi**, **pā**, and **aḷavu**), components referring to certain processes (**yāppu** and **tūkku**), and aesthetic components (**toṭai**, **māṭṭu**, **vaṇṇam**, **iyaipu**, and **īlaipu**).

Core Structural Components

Since the letters (**eluttu**) are the most basic entities of a poem, traditional Tamil grammars on prosody always begin with a discussion of

¹ When the subject matter is put into a composition, established conventions are to be followed. The tradition refers to such established conventions by the term **marapu** “custom, convention, practice.” The conventions pertain to words and practices that are contemporaneous with the composition. Motivated readers are encouraged to read the commentators’ excellent discussion on **marapu** in *Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷatikāram*, Nacc:80-81, cey.80; Pē:235, cey.392.

² The details provided in the following pages about these 34 components are extremely technical and crisscross because they deal with a highly developed complex and rich poetic system. Wherever possible, I have tried to present them in simple terms.

eḷuttu and their quantity. See “Phonology” for a discussion about **eḷuttu** and **māttirai** ‘duration.’³ The features **acai**, **cīr**, **aṭi**, and **pā** are discussed next.

acai (basic metrical unit)

The basic metrical unit in Tamil prosody is called the **acai** ‘movement’ (< **acai** ‘to move, sway’), which is mostly based on vowel length. Rarely, a consonant attains the status of an **acai**. This is discussed below. See “Metrical Significance of Certain Letters.” There are two basic types of **acai**: **nēr** ‘to be straight; straightness’ and **nirai** ‘to be in a row; array.’ A traditional commentator explains the terms **nēr** and **nirai**. He says that **nēr** is a fine **acai** (“**nēriya acai**”), because it is formed not by two letters (**eḷuttu**) but by one. The **nirai** **acai**, according to him, obtains its name because two **eḷuttu** fall in a row in it and give the meaning, ‘movement of a pair.’⁴

From our perspective, the **nēr** has the pattern (C)V(C)(C) or (C)V̄(C)(C) and **nirai**, (C)VCV(C)(C) or (C)VCV̄(C)(C). These basic **acai** patterns are expanded and respectively obtain the names **nērupu** and **niraipu** when they represent non-monosyllabic words that are not composed of two short open syllables but end with the short vowel **u**: e.g., ஆடு āṭu ‘to play’ is of the pattern V̄Cu, a **nērupu acai**; வில்லு villu ‘bow’ is of the pattern CVCCu, a **nērupu acai**; வரகு varaku ‘millet’ is of the pattern CVCVCu, a **niraipu acai**. Ultimately then, any non-monosyllabic word which is not made up of two short open syllables, but which ends with the

³ The rest of this chapter presupposes an understanding of Tamil letters (**eḷuttu**). Unlike in the case of the vowels, length/duration of consonants does not play a crucial role in classical Tamil prosody.

⁴ “iraṇṭu eḷuttu niraitaliṇ inai acai eṇṇum poruḷ paṭa ...” (cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:8, cey.3).

short vowel **u**, qualifies to be a **nērupu acai** or a **niraipu acai**.⁵ More examples are given below.

The two most basic acai, **nēr** and **nirai**, are called **iyal acai** 'natural acai' because they are used without being modified. Their expanded versions, **nērupu** and **niraipu**, which are actually extended basic acai, are called **uri acai** 'acai which are proper (for further action)' because they are modified forms of the **iyal acai** and are appropriate for subsequent use.⁶ Certain combinations of these four acai give rise to what can be

⁵ One of the commentators explains what is so special about the short vowel **u** at the end of these words (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:9, cey.4). He says that the extra-short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram**) at the end of these words cannot be ignored like a vowelless consonant (**orru**) because it sounds longer than a vowelless consonant and at the same time cannot be given a separate identity like a vowel (**uyir**) because it does not sound as long as a vowel. On the other hand, **murriyal ukaram** which is at the end of these words, although has one unit measure of length like a vowel, produces the same kind of sound produced by the extra-short **u** in poetry, and therefore has to be treated like the extra-short **u**.

Thus, the non-monosyllabic word which is not made up of two short open syllables but which ends with the short vowel **u** would simply be a **nēr acai** or a **nirai acai** if the short vowel **u** at the end is ignored. It would be a **nēr-nēr** or a **nirai-nēr**, if the short **u** at the end is given a separate acai status. But, the short **u** in these contexts, whether **kurriyal ukaram** or **murriyal ukaram**, should neither be ignored nor should be given a separate acai status — hence the special names **nērupu** and **niraipu**.

It must be noted that the **kurriyal ukaram** or **murriyal ukaram** in these words is given a separate acai status in later Tamil prosody. The concept of **nērupu** and **niraipu** is obsolete in the post-classical period and therefore the standard medieval treatise on Tamil prosody, Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai, does not discuss them at all. Words which would have been construed as of the pattern **nērupu** or **niraipu** by the earlier convention are treated respectively as of the pattern **nēr-nēr** or **nirai-nēr** in post-classical period. This change in the prosodic convention tells us that the short vowel **u**, whether **kurriyal ukaram** or **murriyal ukaram**, occurring at the end of non-monosyllabic words which are not made up of two short open syllables, was pronounced more strongly in post-classical period so as to gain a prominent place in prosodic analysis.

⁶ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:10, cey.6.

called a metrical foot, which in the tradition is known by the generic term **cīr** ‘order, beauty’ which is discussed below.

The term **acai** and syllable

An **acai** is not automatically identical to a syllable. A **nēr acai**, (C)V(C)(C) or (C) \bar{V} (C)(C) is equivalent to a syllable. A **nirai acai**, (C)VCV(C)(C) or (C)VC \bar{V} (C)(C), on the other hand, has two syllables of which the first is always short. Similarly, **nērpū** and **niraipū** has more than one syllable each. The first syllable in **nērpū** can be short or long, whereas the first syllable in **niraipū** is always short. Ultimately then, the maximum number of syllables an **acai** could have is three, giving rise to the pattern **niraipū**, CVCVCCCV or CVC \bar{V} CCCV where the last vowel (marked in bold type as **V**) is the short vowel **u**: e.g., வளர்த்து **vaḷarttu**; கலாய்த்து **kalāyttu**. Theoretically, the short vowel **u** at the end could be a **kurriyal ukaram** or a **murriyal ukaram**.

The term **acai** and word

An **acai** does not always contain a meaningful unit. It can be made up of one meaningful unit or part of a meaningful unit. For example, the “word” தேமா (**tēmā** ‘sweet mango’), contains two **acai** which, incidentally, are identical to its two meaningful units தே (**tē** ‘sweet’) and மா (**mā** ‘mango’). Each of these meaningful units is of the **acai** pattern **nēr** (C \bar{V}). When the meaningful unit மா (**mā** ‘mango’) is used in isolation, it also is a “word.” In this tradition, தேமா (**tēmā**) is a “word” (**col**) and so are the separate items தே (**tē** ‘sweet’) and மா (**mā** ‘mango’). Similarly, the “word” சாத்தன் (**Cāttan**, a personal name) has two **nēr acai** (சாத் **cāt** - தன் **tan**): சாத் (**cāt**) is a **nēr acai** of the pattern C \bar{V} C, while தன் (**tan**) is a **nēr acai** of the pattern CVC. Here, each **acai** contains a part of the meaningful unit சாத்தன் (**Cāttan**), which is a “word” (**col**).

Metrical Significance of Certain Letters (eḷuttu)

A vowelless consonant (**orru**) is not normally given a separate **acai** status. It is treated together with its preceding vowel or a different consonant if there is a consonant cluster, and considered to be part of the **acai** made up of that vowel. But when it occurs as an elongated consonant (**orru aḷapeṭai**), it is treated differently in different contexts. This is explained below. Like an ordinary vowelless consonant, a single **āytam** (**ḥ**) also does not have a separate **acai** status.

The extra-short **i** (**kurriyal ikaram**) is not ignored in the metrical analysis of classical Tamil poems. It is treated like other short vowels. In later literature, it is treated like a vowelless consonant occasionally, and subsequently is not considered as part of an **acai**.⁷

The extra-short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram**) and the **murriyal ukaram** do not make up a separate **acai**. This is the situation whether they are followed by a vowelless consonant as a result of being combined with the following word, or whether they result as the final letter (**eḷuttu**) by deleting the final consonant **m̐** in the word in which they occur, or whether they occur at the end of the last line in a poem. For example, in நானுத்தன யாக வைகி, *nāṇuttaḷai yāka vaiki* (*aka.29:21*), நானு 'bashfulness', ends with a **murriyal ukaram**. Although followed by the vowelless consonant **ṭ**, as a result of being combined with the following word தன, நானு would be considered as a **nēṛpu acai**, not as **nēr-nēr**. Similarly, in நெருப்புச்சினத் தணிந்த நிணந்தயங்கு கொழுங்குறை *neruppucciṇan taṇinta niṇantayaṅku koḷuṅkuṛai* (*pura.125:2*), நெருப்பு 'fire' ends with an extra-short **u**. Although followed by the vowelless consonant **ṣ**, as a result of being combined with the following word சினத் (< சினம் 'fury'), நெருப்பு would be a **niraipu**

⁷ Cf. *Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷatikāram*, Pē:132, cey.320; *ḷam*:423, cey.316.

acai and would not be treated as **nirai-nēr**.⁸ Now, in *pari.20:100*, குடைவிரித் தவைபோலக் கோலு மலர் kuṭaivirin tavaipōlak kōlu malar, கோலு would be a **nērpu**, not **nēr-nēr**. In this item, the final consonant ம் in கோலும் 'they open up' is deleted because of the beginning consonant ம in the following word மலர், and the word கோலும் is reduced to கோலு with a **murriyal ukaram** at the end. In *pari.6:106*, the last line ends with an extra-short **u**: வாடற்க வையை நினக்கு vāṭarka vaiyai niṇakku. Here, நினக்கு niṇakku 'for you' would be treated as a **niraipu**, not as **nirai-nēr**. Similarly, the last line in *kalittokai 18* ends with an extra-short **u**: சென்ற இளமை தரற்க cenra ilamai tararku. தரற்க tararku 'for bringing' would be a **niraipu**, not **nirai-nēr**.⁹

When the extra-short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram**) or the **murriyal ukaram** coalesces with a word beginning with the regular short **u**, it is not considered as part of a **nērpu** or a **niraipu**. For example, in *pura.52:1*, நஞ்சுடை வாலெயிற் றைந்தலை சுமந்த nañcuṭai vāleyiṛ ṛaintalai cumanta, நஞ்சுடை is derived from combining நஞ்சு 'poison' + உடை 'having; with.' The word நஞ்சு ends with an extra-short **u**, while the following word உடை begins with the regular short **u**. The two vowels combine and result in one short vowel, **u**. This resultant short **u**, which is contained in சு, is not treated as part of நஞ்சு to yield a **nērpu**. Rather, it is taken together with the following டை, and thus நஞ்சுடை would be **nēr-nirai** (நஞ்சுடை).

⁸ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Pē:134, 136, cey.321; Ilam:424, cey.317.

⁹ In post-classical prosodic analysis, நாணு(ச்), நெருப்பு(ச்), கோலு(ம்), நினக்கு, and தரற்கு would be treated respectively as having the following patterns: **nēr-nēr**, **nirai-nēr**, **nēr-nēr**, **nirai-nēr**, and **nirai-nēr**. But if any of them were to occur as the very last foot in the last line of a **venpā**, a different scheme (= the classical scheme) would apply the following formulaic names to them: நாணு (= **kācu**), நெருப்பு (= **pirappu**), கோலு (= **kācu**), நினக்கு (= **pirappu**), and தரற்கு (= **pirappu**). Note that these formulaic names themselves end with a short **u**.

When the extra-short **u** or the **muṟṟiyal ukaram** is followed by a word beginning with any vowel other than the regular short **u**, it is deleted. For example, in *pura.202:18*, அரும்பற மலர்ந்த கருங்கால் வேங்கை *arumpara malarnta karuṅkāḷ vēṅkai*, அரும்பற is derived from அரும்பு 'buds' + அற 'without.' Subsequently, அரும்பற would be a **nirai-nirai** (அரும்-பற), not **niraipu-nēr** or anything else.

In general, elongated vowels (**uyir aḷapeṭai**) and elongated consonants (**orru aḷapeṭai**) are treated in two ways: in some instances the second letter (vowel or consonant) in the unit of elongation is given a separate **acai** status and in some others not, depending upon the meter of the line in which it occurs. Furthermore, elongated consonants are treated differently from elongated vowels. This will become clear from the discussion in the following paragraphs.

Examples of elongated vowels that are treated in two ways are as follows. Consider the following line: ஏஎ யோஒவென் நேலா வவ்விளி (*pari.19:62*). Here, ஏஎ யோஒவென் would be scanned as ஏ-எ யோஒ-வென் **nēr-nēr nēr-nēr**. The short **e** (எ) which symbolizes the elongation of the long **ē** (ஏ) in ஏஎ attains the status of an **acai**, whereas the short **o** (ஒ), which symbolizes the elongation of long **ō** in யோஒ, is not taken into account for considering the **acai** pattern of யோஒ.¹⁰ Now consider ஏஎஇன கிளத்தலி னினைமைநற் கறிந்தனம் (*pari.3:62*). Here, ஏஎஇன would be scanned as ஏஎ-இன, **nēr-nirai**. Consequently, the short **e** (எ) which symbolizes the elongation of the long **ē** (ஏ) in ஏஎ is not taken into account for considering

¹⁰ Hypothetically, if ஏஎ யோஒவென் நேலா வவ்விளி is scanned as ஏ-எ யோ-ஒவென் நே-லா வவ்-விளி, the **acai** patterns would be as follows: **nēr-nēr nēr-nirai nēr-nēr nēr-nirai**. This would produce an **iyarcīr-veṇ-taḷai** between யோஒவென் and நே-லா. But, if the line is scanned as ஏ-எ யோஒ-வென் நே-லா வவ்-விளி, the **acai** patterns would be as follows: **nēr-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nirai**. This would produce an **ācīriya-t-taḷai** between யோஒ-வென் and நே-லா, which is preferred in this context.

the **acai** pattern of எ.¹¹ In எ யோஒ வென விளி யேற்பிக்க (*pari.19:61*), எ யோஒ would be scanned as எ-எ யோ-ஒ, **nēr-nēr nēr-nēr**. Notice that in this context the short o (ஒ) which symbolizes the elongation of long ō in யோஒ does attain the status of a separate **acai**.

When the word containing an elongated vowel ends with a **kurriyal ukaram** or a **murriyal ukaram**, the short vowel which symbolizes the elongation of the long vowel is separated from the long vowel and subsequently joined with the following letter(s) for the sake of its **acai** status. For example, ஆஅங்கு would be treated as **nēr-nērpu** (ஆ-அங்கு), ஆஅவது as **nēr-niraipu** (ஆ-அவது), புகாஅர்த்து as **nirai-nērpu** (புகா-அர்த்து), and பராஅயது as **nirai-niraipu** (பரா-அயது). But, if the word is யாஅது, it would be treated like **nēr-nirai** (யா-அது), not as **nēr-niraipu**, because the component அது by itself does not end with a **kurriyal ukaram** or a **murriyal ukaram** so as to yield a **niraipu** pattern. Similarly, வடாஅது (*pura.6:1*) would be treated like **nirai-nirai** (வடா-அது) not as **nirai-niraipu**, and it would be referred to by the formulaic name **kaṇaviri** (கணவிரி).¹²

When a consonant is elongated and written as two, the second one may occasionally attain the status of an **acai**. For example, in *malai:352*, கண்ண் தண்ணெனைக் கண்டும் கேட்டும் (*kaṇṇ taṇṇenak kaṇṭum kēṭṭum*), the first item கண்ண் (*kaṇṇ < kaṇ* 'eye') is to be scanned as கண்-ண், **nēr-nēr**. That is, in கண்ண், *kaṇṇ*, the second element *ṇ* (ண்) in the elongated consonant *ṇṇ* (ண்ண்) attains a separate **acai** status. But, the second element *ṇ* (ண்) in the elongated consonant *ṇṇ* (ண்ண்) does not attain a separate **acai** status in the item தண்ணெனைக், which is to be scanned as தண்ண்-னைக், **nēr-nirai**.¹³

¹¹ If எஎஇன is scanned as எ-எஇ-ன, it would become a different foot of the pattern **nēr-nirai-nēr**, a foot with three **acai**, which is not appropriate in this context. Therefore, the short எ has to be discounted.

¹² Cf. *Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷatikāram*, *Nacc:20*, *cey.17*.

¹³ Commentators explain that in this situation, the poet who composed the poem

Examples of the *nēr acai* patterns:

nēr-nēr

In fact, if தண்ணெனக் is scanned as தண்-ண்-னெனக் resulting in the pattern **nēr-nēr-nirai**, it would produce a certain metrical foot called **vañci-uri-c-ṅir** which is appropriate to occur in this line.

¹⁴ Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:22, cey.17; Pē:154, cey.330.

ekkar ‘white sand’ (<i>aiṅk.148:1</i>)	ek-kar	nēr-nēr
ōtam ‘ocean’ (<i>aiṅk.145:2</i>)	ō-tam	nēr-nēr
aṇṇāy ‘O mother!’ (<i>aiṅk.201:1</i>)	aṇ-ṇāy	nēr-nēr
īrntaṇ ‘fresh and cool’ (<i>aiṅk.213:2</i>)	īrn-taṇ	nēr-nēr
yāyē ‘my mother, indeed’ (<i>aiṅk.253:4</i>)	yā-yē	nēr-nēr
āmpal ‘water lily’ (<i>puṇa.63:13</i>)	ām-pal	nēr-nēr
pōlnta ‘split’ (<i>aka.41:6</i>)	pōln-ta	nēr-nēr
poyccūḷ ‘false promise’ (<i>kali.75:21</i>)	poyc-cūḷ	nēr-nēr
eykkum ‘it will weaken’ (<i>kuṇu.112:1</i>)	eyk-kum	nēr-nēr

[The **nēr acai** of the pattern in which a short vowel could occur alone in the beginning of a word is not common unless there is hiatus between itself and the following word, as for example, **a ā iḷaṇtāṇ** ‘O, Alas! He lost it’ (*nālaṭiyār 9:4*). This pattern of the **nēr acai** is not found in the **caṅkam** anthologies.]

Examples of the **nirai acai** patterns:

maṇamukai ‘fragrant bud’ (<i>aka.42:1</i>)	maṇa-mukai	nirai-nirai
kaṇicciyum ‘and the trident’ (<i>kali.105:20</i>)	kaṇic-ciyum	nirai-nirai
uritiṇḷ ‘rightfully’ (<i>aka.10:7</i>)	uri-tiṇḷ	nirai-nirai
uṭaitarum ‘breaking’ (<i>aka.10:9</i>)	uṭai-tarum	nirai-nirai
uruppavir ‘where the heat unfolds’ (<i>aka.11:2</i>)	urup-pavir	nirai-nirai
ayirtukaḷ ‘sand dust’ (<i>naṇṇ.163:2</i>)	ayirt-tukaḷ	nirai-nirai

tĩmpukārt ‘pleasant Pukār’ (<i>paṭṭ</i> :173)	tĩm-pukārt	nēr-nirai
kamaḷkaṭām ‘smelling rut of the elephant’ (<i>kali</i> .48:5)	kamaḷ-kaṭām	nirai-nirai
makiḷnta ‘those who rejoiced’ (<i>narr</i> .239:2)	makiḷn-ta	nirai-nēr

Examples of the **nērpū acaī** patterns:

kūmpuviṭu ‘splitting conical (buds)’ (<i>aka</i> .36:4)	kūmpu-viṭu	nērpū-nirai
cevicāyttu ‘leaning the ear’ (<i>aka</i> .63:10)	cevi-cāyttu	nirai-nērpū
āṭuvaḷi ‘while playing’ (<i>aka</i> .49:18)	āṭu-vaḷi	nērpū-nirai
pāṛutalai ‘wide-spread top’ (<i>aka</i> .21:15)	pāru-talai	nērpū-nirai
piṛarttantu ‘bringing others’ (<i>aka</i> .28:40)	piṛart-tantu	nirai-nērpū
nillunī ‘You, just stop!’ (<i>pari</i> .18:39)	nillu-nī	nērpū-nēr
añcuvara ‘frightening’ (<i>aka</i> .63:9)	añcu-vara	nērpū-nirai
illuyttu ‘sending toward home’ (<i>kuṛu</i> .354:3)	il-luyttu	nēr-nērpū
nīrkkunimirntu (<i>aka</i> .79:6) ‘straightening up for (going toward) water’	nīrkku-nimirntu	nērpū-nirai
īṇṇupuraṇ tarutal (<i>pura</i> .312:1) ‘bringing forth, having given birth’	īṇru-puraṇ	nērpū-nirai

Examples of the **niraipu** acai patterns:

muṭaṅkutāl 'bending leg' (aka.63:5)	muṭaṅku-tāl	niraipu-nēr
kuvavunutal 'curved forehead' (aka.49:6)	kuvavu-nutal	niraipu-nirai
valviraintu 'rushing fast' (aka.47:2)	val-viraintu	nēr-niraipu
alaṅkukaḷai 'swaying bamboo' (aka.47:4)	alaṅku-kaḷai	niraipu-nirai
palavukkaṇi 'jack fruit' (kuru.90:4)	palavuk-kaṇi	niraipu-nirai
iṟavukkalittu 'the fish, being excited' (aka.96:1)	iṟavuk-kalittu	niraipu-niraipu
nacai yurātu 'without experiencing' (poru:2)	yurātu	niraipu
irātu 'without sitting on ...' (aka.141:21)	irātu	niraipu

cīr (metrical foot)

Combinations of the four basic acai (**nēr**, **nirai**, **nēru**, and **niraipu**) give rise to metrical feet which are known by the generic term **cīr** 'order, beauty.' A traditional commentator explains that such combination is called **cīr** because it stands similar to **pāṇi**, which is the beginning of a rhythmic beat falling into a cycle.¹⁵ He also explains that a rhythmic cycle (**tālam**)

¹⁵ "pāṇi pōṇṇu ilayam paṭa niṟṟal" (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Pē:141, cey.324).

has three components, namely **pāṇi**, **tūkku**, and **cīr**, in which the **pāṇi** marks the beginning of the cycle while the **tūkku** contains the duration of the cycle and the **cīr** marks the time lapse of the cycle.¹⁶ Another commentator says that **cīr** by itself brings sound (**ōcai**) to a poem.¹⁷

Types of **cīr**

The four basic **acai** are combined being chosen two or three at a time. The metrical feet obtained by combining two **acai** at a time are called **īr-acai-c-cīr** 'cīr with two **acai**' and those which are obtained by combining three at a time are **mū-v-acai-c-cīr** 'cīr with three **acai**.' Rarely in classical Tamil poems four **acai** are combined to form a **four-acai-c-cīr** (e.g., புறம்-பெற்றிசி-சே *pura.11:9*). Since there are four basic **acai** to choose from, the number of possible two-**acai** patterns (**īr-acai-c-cīr**) is 16 ($= 4^n$, where $n = 2$) and the number of possible three-**acai** patterns (**mū-v-acai-c-cīr**) is 64 ($= 4^n$, where $n = 3$).

There are situations where none of the four basic **acai** has to combine with another to form a metrical foot, and such foot is called an **ōr-acai-c-cīr** 'cīr composed of one **acai**.' In those instances, the single **acai** has to coincide with a meaningful word. It appears mostly as the last foot of a line in certain types of meters like the **ācīriyam** and **venṇpā**, while always occurring as the last **cīr** of the last line in a poem composed solely in the **venṇpā** meter.¹⁸

¹⁶ Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar's commentary on *kali.1:7, 10, 13, 15*: "oru tālatṭi mutal eṭukkum kālatṭiṇai uṭaiya **pāṇi**"; "ataṇ iṭai nikaḷum kālattu atāṇai uṭaiya **tūkku**"; "tālam muṭintuviṭum kālatṭiṇait taṇṇiṭattē koṇṭa **cīr**."

¹⁷ Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Iḷam:443, cey.361.

¹⁸ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Iḷam:432, cey.335; Nacc:31, cey.27; Pē:165, 228, cey.339, 386.

For example, consider *aka.141:20*, which is in the **ācīriyam** meter: தீங்குடை வாழை

Two Conventions of Evaluating a *cīr*

Two different conventions provide different ways of considering a metrical foot (*cīr*). One is to view *cīr* as composed of so many basic units known as *acai*, while the other is more fundamental and views a foot as consisting of so many letters (*eḷuttu*).

When a metrical foot is construed in terms of the number of letters in it, vowelless consonants (*orru*), *āytam* (*h*), and the extra-short *u* (*kurriyal ukaram*) are not taken into account. Thus, for example, if வண்டு *vaṇṭu* ‘bee’ is used as a *cīr*, it would be considered as containing just one *eḷuttu* வ *va*. Here, the last two *eḷuttu* in வண்டு would be ignored because the penultimate *eḷuttu* ண் *ṇ* is a vowelless consonant, whereas the last *eḷuttu* டு *ṭu* contains the extra-short *u*. Once the extra-short *u* in டு *ṭu* is ignored, the remaining ட் *ṭ* becomes a vowelless consonant and will be ignored subsequently. Similarly, if ஞாயிறு *ñāyiru* ‘sun’ is a *cīr*, it would be considered as containing just two *eḷuttu* ஞா *ñā* and யி *yi*, because the last item ரு *ru*, which contains the extra-short *u*, would be ignored.

The two different modes of considering a metrical foot mean that certain feet are treated in two ways. Thus, if வண்டு *vaṇṭu* is used as a *cīr* in a poem, the extra-short *u* in it would be considered for determining its *acai* pattern, but not for being counted as an *eḷuttu*. The pattern of வண்டு is CVC-Cu, and so it is a *nērpū acai*. And it would be referred to

யோங்குமட லிராது *tīṅkulai vāḷai yōṅku maṭa lirātu*. Here, the last item லிராது (< ல், part of the preceding word மடல் ‘leaf’ + இராது ‘without sitting on’) is a *niraipu acai* of the pattern CVCVCu and makes up a *cīr*. Similarly, the last line in *pari.6:106* is in the *veṇṇā* meter and its last *cīr* is a single *acai*: வாடற்க வையை நினக்கு *vāṭarka vaiyai niṇakku*. Here, நினக்கு ‘for you’ is a *niraipu*. In *kalittokai* 24, which ends in the *veṇṇā* meter, the last line has a single *acai* as its last *cīr*: போயின்று சொல்லென் உயிர் *pōyīṇṇu colḷeṇ uyir*. In later texts, *veṇṇā* meter is very common and the last line of each *veṇṇā* ends with just one *acai* making up a *cīr* by itself. For example, consider *muttoḷḷāyiram* 27:4: என்பெரு வாடுமென் தோள் *eṇṇepēṛā vāṭumenṇ tōḷ*, in which தோள் is a *nēr acai*.

as a **cīr** with one **acai** (**ōr-acai-c-cīr**). But, when it is to be referred to in terms of the **eḷuttu** it contains, it would be a **cīr** consisting of just one **eḷuttu**. Similarly, in ஞாயிறு **ñāyiru**, the ரு containing the extra-short **u** would be considered for deciding the **acai** pattern of ஞாயிறு, but not for being counted as an **eḷuttu**. Thus, the pattern of ஞாயிறு is C \bar{V} -CVCu, **nēr-niraipu**, and the word would be referred to as a **cīr** made up of two **acai** (**īr-acai-c-cīr**) and as containing two **eḷuttu**.

The number of **acai** in a metrical foot is not always equal to the number of letters in it. Consider for example, குறும்பொறைமருங்கு **kuṟumpōraimarun̄ku** ‘near the small rock.’ It is made up of three **acai**: குறும்-பொறை-மருங்கு **kuṟum-pōrai-marun̄ku**. The first **acai**, குறும் is a **nirai** of the pattern CVCVC. The second, பொறை, is a **nirai** of the pattern CVC \bar{V} . The third one, மருங்கு, is a **niraipu** of the pattern CVCVCCu. When the **eḷuttu** in குறும்பொறைமருங்கு are counted, the vowelless consonants (ம் and ங்) and the **eḷuttu** containing the extra-short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram**) at the end are left out, and so the resulting number of countable **eḷuttu** are six: கு, ரு, பொ, றை, ம, and ரு. Thus, the **cīr** குறும்பொறைமருங்கு has three **acai**, but six **eḷuttu**.¹⁹

The Number of Letters (**eḷuttu**) Permitted in a Metrical Foot (**cīr**)

The tradition holds that a **cīr** normally does not contain more than five **eḷuttu** and only a certain type of metrical foot called the **vañci**

¹⁹ The mode of understanding a metrical foot in terms of the number of letters in it was necessary in the history of Tamil when lines in a poem were composed based on the number of letters. One traditional commentator explains that this practice was difficult for the poets of the last **caṅkam** (“kaṭai-c-caṅkattārkku”) and therefore they composed lines in a poem based on the number of metrical feet instead (cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:52, cey.51).

uriccīr would contain a maximum of six **eluttu**.²⁰ The minimum number of **eluttu** in a **vañci uriccīr**, which produces the meter called **vañci**, is three.²¹ Examples:

தூங்குகையான் ஓங்குநடைய	<i>pura.22:1</i>
தூ கை யா (three eluttu); ஓ ந டை ய (four eluttu)	
உறழ்மணியான் உயர்மருப்பின	<i>pura.22:2</i>
உ ற ம ணி யா (five eluttu); உ ய ம ரு பி ன (six eluttu)	
இலக்கம்போன்றன : இ ல க போ ற ன (six eluttu)	<i>pura.4:11</i>
விறல்வேந்தனுமே : வி ற வே த னு மே (six eluttu)	<i>pura.11:7</i>

The Term **cīr** and Syllable

It is obvious that a Tamil metrical foot (**cīr**) is not identical to a syllable. Note that the maximum number of syllables a foot can have is nine giving rise to the pattern **niraipu-niraipu-niraipu**, CVCVC(C)(C)V-CVCVC(C)(C)V-CVCVC(C)(C)V, where in each **niraipu**, the first vowel is always short, the second one can be short or long, but the last vowel (marked in bold type as **V**) must always be a short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram** or **murriyal ukaram**). Examples: விலங்கு -வழங்கு -பொருப்பு (**vilanku-vaḷaṅku-poruppu**); உராய்ந்து-உராய்ந்து-கலாய்த்து (**urāyntu-urāyntu-kalāyttu**).

The Term **cīr** and Word

A word can spread across two metrical feet. By the same token, a foot can contain more than one word. For example, in *aka.56:16*, மம்மம்

²⁰ Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc.41, cey.42; Pē:181, cey.354.

²¹ Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc.44, cey.46.

நெஞ்சினோன் தொழுதுநின் ரதுவே **mammar neñcinōn tolutunin ratuvē**, the word நின்றது **ninratu** 'the state of standing' is spread between the last foot and the penultimate foot. The penultimate foot தொழுதுநின் , on the other hand, contains more than the word தொழுது **tolutu** 'worshipping.'

Meters Produced by Different **cīr**

Various types of metrical feet produce four types of classical Tamil meter, namely, **ācīriyam**, **vañci**, **veṇṇpā**, and **kali**. Meter (**pā**) is discussed below. The **iyarcīr** 'natural **cīr**' and the **ācīriya uriccīr** '**cīr** which are appropriate for the **ācīriyam**' produce the meter called the **ācīriyam**. The **veṇ cīr** '**cīr** which are appropriate for the **veṇṇpā**' produce the **veṇṇpā** and **kali** meters. The **vañci uriccīr** '**cīr** which are appropriate for the **vañci**' produce the **vañci** meter. These various feet are discussed next.

Formulaic Names for the Different **cīr**

In the tradition, each combination of the various **acai** is given a formulaic name (**vāypāṭu**) which in turn exemplifies the structure of the **cīr** it stands for. These names differ according to different schools. However, each **acai** which participates in making up a **cīr** is given a name which is an adjective, verb, or a noun referring to an entity from nature. Examples: **tē** 'sweet'; **puḷi** 'tart'; **vāḷ** 'to live'; **pōku** 'going'; **varu** 'coming'; **puli** 'tiger'; **pāmpu** 'snake'; **mā** 'mango'; **viḷa** 'wood-apple'; **kāy** 'unripe fruit'; **kaṇi** 'ripe fruit'; **vāy** 'pass, path'; **kāṇ** 'jungle'; **curam** 'forest'; **kaṭaṟu** 'forest, jungle'; **kār** 'cloud'; **urumu** 'thunder.' Thus, **nēr-nēr** is given the formulaic name **tē-mā** (தேமா 'sweet mango'); **nēr-nēr-nēr** is given the name **tē-mā(ñ)-kāy** (தேமாங்காய் 'sweet unripe mango'), and so on. The combinations of various **acai** and their names are given below. Certain combinations are considered to be appropriate for certain types of meters and this information is included in the discussion below.

iyarċir “natural feet”

These are **ir-acai-c-ċir**, obtained by combining two **acai** at a time. The first one of these two-**acai** combinations could be **nēr**, **nirai**, **nērpū**, or **niraipu**, and the restriction is on the second **acai**. The second should be a **nēr** when the first is a **nērpū** or a **niraipu**. Thus, ten patterns of the **iyarċir** are obtained as follows.

iyarċir	acai pattern	formulaic name
nēr nēr	நேர் நேர்	(தேமா or வாய்க்கால்)
nirai nēr	நிரை நேர்	(புளிமா or துலைவாய்)
nirai nirai	நிரை நிரை	(கருவிளம் or கணவிரி)
nēr nirai	நேர் நிரை	(கூவிளம் or பாதிரி)
nēr nērpū	நேர் நேர்பு	(மாங்காடு or போரேறு; treated like பாதிரி)
nirai nērpū	நிரை நேர்பு	(களங்காடு or கடியாறு; treated like கணவிரி)
nirai niraipu	நிரை நிரைபு	(கடிகுரங்கு or மழகளிறு; treated like கணவிரி)
nēr niraipu	நேர் நிரைபு	(மாங்குரங்கு or பூமருது; treated like பாதிரி)
nērpū nēr	நேர்பு நேர்	(ஆற்றுக்கால் or நீத்துநீர்; treated like பாதிரி)
niraipu nēr	நிரைபு நேர்	(குளத்துக்கால் or குளத்துநீர்; treated like கணவிரி)

The above **iyarċir** are permissible in all four types of classical Tamil meter. However, there are some restrictions.²²

²² Two specific **iyarċir** ending with a **nēr** do not occur in a **kalippā** and are not preferred as the first metrical feet of a line in a certain type of **vañcippā**. That is, **nēr-nēr** (தேமா) and **nirai-nēr** (புளிமா) do not occur to produce the metrical binding (**taḷai**) known as **kalittaḷai**. They are more common at the end of a line with only two feet producing the

ācīriya uriccīr ‘cīr which are proper for the **ācīriyam** meter’

These metrical feet also are obtained by combining two **acai** at a time. In these, the first **acai** is either a **nērpū** or a **nīraipū**. The second is **nērpū**, **nīraipū**, or **nīrai**. Six such combinations are possible:

ācīriya uriccīr	acai pattern	formulaic name
nērpū nērpū	நேர்பு நேர்பு	(ஆற்றுநோக்கு or வீடுபேறு)
nīraipū nērpū	நிரைபு நேர்பு	(வரகுசோறு)
nīraipū nīraipū	நிரைபு நிரைபு	(வரகுதவிடு or தடவுமருது)

vañci meter (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:30, cey.25; Pē:162-164, cey.337). Consider *puṛa.2:1*, மண்டிணிந்த நிலனும், which is a **vañci** line, in which the second foot நிலனும் is of the pattern **nīrai-nēr**. See below for the definitions of a metrical binding and **vañci** line.

This restriction does not apply to a **vañci** line which has three feet (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:31, cey.26). Consider பந்த ரந்தரம் வேய்ந்து (*pati.51:16*), which is a **vañci** line made up of three metrical feet. Here, the first foot பந்த is of the pattern **nēr-nēr** (தேமா). Now, consider *puṛa.7:1*, which is a **vañci** line with two metrical feet: களிறு கடைஇயதாள். Here, the first foot களிறு is of the pattern **nīraipū**, not **nīrai-nēr**.

The two **iyarccīr** ending with **nīrai** (**nēr-nīrai** and **nīrai-nīrai**) can occur as the first foot of a **vañci** line (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:30-31, cey.26). For example, in வாலிணர் மடற்றாழை (*paṭṭi.118*), வாலிணர் is of the pattern **nēr-nīrai**. In அகல்வயன் மலைவேலி (*puṛa.17:10*), அகல்வயன் is of the pattern **nīrai-nīrai**.

The two **iyarccīr** in which the first **acai** is a **nērpū** or a **nīraipū** (**nērpū-nēr** and **nīraipū-nēr**) are treated like **nēr-nīrai** and **nīrai-nīrai** respectively (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Pē:146, 147, cey.327; Nacc:19, cey.15). For example, in ஓங்குமலைப் பெருவில் பாம்புஞாண் கொளீஇ (*puṛa.55:1*), பாம்புஞாண் is of the pattern **nērpū-nēr**, but will be treated like **nēr-nīrai** when its binding with the following foot is to be considered. In வருந்துநாய் நாவின் பெருந்தகு சீறடி (*poru.42*), வருந்துநாய் is of the pattern **nīraipū-nēr**, but will be treated like **nīrai-nīrai** when its binding with the following foot is to be considered.

nērpū niraipu	நேர்பு நிரைபு	(ஆற்றுவரவு or பாறுகுருகு)
nērpū nirai	நேர்பு நிரை	
		(யாற்றுமடை or நீடுகொடி; treated like பாதிரி)
niraipu nirai	நிரைபு நிரை ²³	
		(குளத்துமடை or உரறுபுலி; treated like கணவிரி)

The *ācīriya uriccīr* occur in a certain line called *vañci aṭi* without any restrictions and occur in *ācīriyappā*, *veṇṇā*, and *kalippā* with some restrictions.²⁴

²³ By a different convention, the last two *uriccīr* (*nērpū-nirai* and *niraipu-nirai*) are *iaṟcīr* (cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Pē:163, cey.338, where the commentator refers to நிலவுமணல், *niraipu-nirai*, as an *iaṟcīr*).

²⁴ In ஓங்குதிரை வியன்பரப்பி (*matu:1*), which is a *vañci* line, ஓங்குதிரை is of the pattern *nērpū-nirai*.

The *ācīriya uriccīr* in which both *acai* are *uriyacai* (*nērpū-nērpū*, *niraipu-nērpū*, *niraipu-niraipu*, and *nērpū-niraipu*) do not normally occur in an *ācīriyappā* or in a *veṇṇā* line with four feet. But in certain lines in an *ācīriyappā* which do not produce the binding known as the *ācīriyattaḷai*, these metrical feet are not forbidden (cf. Iḷam:431, cey.331; Nacc:17, 29, cey.13; Pē:160, cey.335). Examples: In வெளிற்றுப்பனத் துணியின் வீற்றுவீற்றுக் கிடப்ப (*puṛa.35:22*), வீற்றுவீற்றுக் is of the pattern *nērpū-nērpū*. In வண்புகழ் நிறைந்து வசிந்துவாங்கு நிமிர்தோள் (*tiru.106*), வசிந்துவாங்கு is *niraipu-nērpū*. In நறவுண் மண்டை நூடக்கலி கிறவுக்கலித்து (*aka.96:1*), கிறவுக்கலித்து is *niraipu-niraipu*. In திருந்துகோ லெல்வளை தெழிப்ப நாணுமறந்து (*kuṛi:167*), நாணுமறந்து is *nērpū-niraipu*. These lines are called *cīr-vakai-aṭi* and apparently, no *ācīriyattaḷai* is anticipated in them (cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:29, cey.13). See below for the definition of a *cīr-vakai-aṭi*.

The *ācīriya uriccīr* which end with a *nirai* (*nērpū-nirai* and *niraipu-nirai*) can occur in an *ācīriyappā* producing an *ācīriyattaḷai* (Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:29, cey.23; Pē:160, cey.335). For example, in உவவுமதி யுருவி னோங்கல் வெண்குடை (*puṛa.3:1*), உவவுமதி is of the pattern *niraipu-nirai*.

The same *ācīriya uriccīr* (*nērpū-nirai* and *niraipu-nirai*) are permissible in certain lines in a *kalippā* producing *kalittaḷai* (Nacc:29, cey.24; Pē:145, 161, cey.326, 336). For

venpā uriccīr ‘cīr which are appropriate for the **venpā** meter’

These are metrical feet obtained by combining three **acai** at a time in a specific manner. Normally, 64 combinations are possible if one combines three **acai** at a time from the group of the four basic **acai**. Of those 64 resulting combinations, the ones in which the third **acai** is a **nēr**, and neither of the other two is a **nērpū** or a **niraipu**, are called the **venpā uriccīr**. Actually, to obtain them, the **acai** called **nēr** is added as the third **acai** to the **iyarcīr** discussed above in which none of the **acai** is a **nērpū** or a **niraipu**. Four such combinations are possible in the following manner.

venpā uriccīr	acai pattern	formulaic name
nēr nēr nēr	நேர் நேர் நேர்	(தேமாங்காய் or மாவாழ்கான்)
nirai nēr nēr	நிரை நேர் நேர்	(புளிமாங்காய் or புலிவாழ்கான்)
nirai nirai nēr	நிரை நிரை நேர்	(கருவிளங்காய் or புலிவருகான்)
nēr nirai nēr	நேர் நிரை நேர்	(கூவிளங்காய் or மாவருகான்)

The **vencīr**, as their name suggests, produce the meter called **venpā**. They are permissible in a **vañci** line which does not produce the binding

example, in உரவுத்தகை மழுங்கித்தன் இடும்பையா லொருவனை (*kali.120:4*), உரவுத்தகை is of the pattern **niraipu-nirai**. It produces **kalittalai** when considered together with the following foot.

All the other **ācīriya uriccīr** (**nērpū-nērpū**, **niraipu-nērpū**, **niraipu-niraipu**, and **nērpū-niraipu**) are permissible in certain **kalippā** where the line is known as **cīr-vakai-k-kali-aṭi** (Nacc:29, cey.24).

Examples: In ஆடுகொள் நேமியாற் பரவுதும் நாடுகொண்டு (*kali.105:72*), நாடுகொண்டு is of the pattern **nērpū-nērpū**, and the rest of the line produces **ācīriyattalai**. In தாழ்புதுறந்து தொடிநெகிழ்த்தான் போகிய கானம் (*kali.145:18*), தாழ்புதுறந்து is **nērpū-niraipu**, and the line produces **ven-talai**.

called **vañci-t-talai**.²⁵ For example, in புட்டேம்பப் புயன்மாறி (*paṭṭ:4*), both feet are **veñcīr**. The first one புட்டேம்பப் is of the pattern **nēr-nēr-nēr** and the second, புயன்மாறி, **nirai-nēr-nēr**. The combination of the two produces **kali-t-talai**, not a **vañci-t-talai**. However, the sound recognized is “**tūṅkal ōcai**.” Similarly, in வியனாண்மீ னெறியொழுக (*matu:6*), which is a **vañci** line, the feet are of the patterns **nirai-nēr-nēr** and **nirai-nirai-nēr** respectively and produce **kalittalai**.²⁶

²⁵ Pē:159, cey.334.

²⁶ A commentator notes that it is better to permit just one **veñcīr** in a line in an **āciriyaṭṭā** (Nacc:34, cey.30). The **veñcīr** do not occur in an **āciriyaṭṭā** (Nacc:29, cey.23; Pē:160, cey.335) when the lines have to produce only **āciriyaṭṭalai**. But they are permissible if they harmonize with the rest of the **cīr** in a line producing **āciriyaṭṭalai** or **veṇ talai**. For example, in தமிழ்தலை மயங்கிய தலையாலங் கானத்து (*puṛa.19:2*), தலையாலங் is of the pattern **nirai-nēr-nēr** and கானத்து is **nēr-niraipu**. However, தலையாலங் binds harmoniously with its preceding foot மயங்கிய producing an **āciriyaṭṭalai**. Therefore, the **veñcīr** தலையாலங் is allowed in this line. Similarly, in யந்தளிர்க் குவவுமொய்ம் பலைப்பச் சாந்தருந்தி (*kuṛi:120*), சாந்தருந்தி is of the pattern **nēr-nirai-nēr**. It combines with the preceding foot and produces an **āciriyaṭṭalai**. In கண்டோ ரெல்லா மமர்ந்தினிதி னோக்கி (*malai:496*), மமர்ந்தினிதி is of the pattern **nirai-nirai-nēr**. It binds with the preceding foot producing one type of **veṇ talai** (**iyarcīr veṇ talai**) and binds with the following foot producing another type of **veṇ talai** (**veṇ cīr veṇ talai**).

The **veñcīr** can occur in a **kalippā** to produce the metrical binding called **kalittalai** (Nacc:33, cey.29; Pē:168-169, cey.341). If all the four feet are **veñcīr**, the first **acai** of the last foot would be treated like a **nirai** (Il:432, cey.337; Nacc:33, cey.29; Pē:168-169, cey.341) even if it happens to be a **nēr**; the metrical binding then obtains the name **kalittalai**. Examples: In அரிதாய வறனெய்தி யருளியோர்க் களித்தலும் (*kali.11:1*), the feet are of the patterns **nirai-nēr-nēr** (அரி-தா-ய), **nirai-nēr-nēr** (வற-னெய்-தி), **nirai-nirai** (யரு-ளியோர்க்), and **nirai-nirai** (களித்-தலும்). The first two **veñcīr** produce **kalittalai**. The second one binds with the third, which is an **iyarcīr**, producing **kalittalai**. But, in அடிதாங்கு மளவின்றி யழலன்ன வெம்மையாற் (*kali.11:6*), the penultimate foot, which is a **veñcīr** of the pattern **nirai-nēr-nēr** (யழ-லன்-ன), binds with the last foot whose first **acai** is treated like a **nirai** although it is a **nēr** (வெம்-மையாற்), producing

vañci uriccīr ‘cīr which are proper for the **vañci** meter’

These are also metrical feet obtained by combining three **acai** at a time in a specific manner. Of the 64 possible combinations of feet containing three **acai** at a time, 60 are considered to produce what is called the **vañci** meter and therefore are known as the **vañci uriccīr**. In this type of foot, if the third **acai** is a **nēr**, one or both of the other two are **nērpū** or **niraipu**. The 60 possible combinations of the **vañci uriccīr** are given below. Although these feet are treated separately, they are considered as belonging to the group of **veñcīr**.²⁷

vañci uriccīr	acai pattern	formulaic name
1. nēr nēr nirai	நேர் நேர் நிரை	(மா வாழ் நெறி)
2. nēr nēr nērpū	நேர் நேர் நேர்பு	(மா வாழ் காடு)
3. nēr nēr niraipu	நேர் நேர் நிரைபு	(மா வாழ் பொருப்பு)
4. nēr nirai nirai	நேர் நிரை நிரை	(மா வரு நெறி)
5. nēr nirai nērpū	நேர் நிரை நேர்பு	(மா வரு காடு)
6. nēr nirai niraipu	நேர் நிரை நிரைபு	(மா வரு பொருப்பு)
7. nēr nērpū nēr	நேர் நேர்பு நேர்	(மா போகு கான்)
8. nēr nērpū nirai	நேர் நேர்பு நிரை	(மா போகு நெறி)
9. nēr nērpū nērpū	நேர் நேர்பு நேர்பு	(மா போகு காடு)
10. nēr nērpū niraipu	நேர் நேர்பு நிரைபு	(மா போகு பொருப்பு)
11. nēr niraipu nēr	நேர் நிரைபு நேர்	(மா வழங்கு கான்)
12. nēr niraipu nirai	நேர் நிரைபு நிரை	(மா வழங்கு நெறி)
13. nēr niraipu nērpū	நேர் நிரைபு நேர்பு	(மா வழங்கு காடு)
14. nēr niraipu niraipu	நேர் நிரைபு நிரைபு	(மா வழங்கு பொருப்பு)

kalittalai (Pē:169-170, cey.341).

²⁷ Cf. “vañci uriccīrum taṇ cīr ākaliṇ” Pē:205, cey.367.

15. nirai nēr nirai	நிரை நேர் நிரை	(புலி வாழ் தெறி)
16. nirai nēr nērpū	நிரை நேர் நேர்பு	(புலி வாழ் காடு)
17. nirai nēr niraipu	நிரை நேர் நிரைபு	(புலி வாழ் பொருப்பு)
18. nirai nirai nirai	நிரை நிரை நிரை	(புலி வரு தெறி)
19. nirai nirai nērpū	நிரை நிரை நேர்பு	(புலி வரு காடு)
20. nirai nirai niraipu	நிரை நிரை நிரைபு	(புலி வரு பொருப்பு)
21. nirai nērpū nēr	நிரை நேர்பு நேர்	(புலி போகு கான்)
22. nirai nērpū nirai	நிரை நேர்பு நிரை	(புலி போகு தெறி)
23. nirai nērpū nērpū	நிரை நேர்பு நேர்பு	(புலி போகு காடு)
24. nirai nērpū niraipu	நிரை நேர்பு நிரைபு	(புலி போகு பொருப்பு)
25. nirai niraipu nēr	நிரை நிரைபு நேர்	(புலி வழங்கு கான்)
26. nirai niraipu nirai	நிரை நிரைபு நிரை	(புலி வழங்கு தெறி)
27. nirai niraipu nērpū	நிரை நிரைபு நேர்பு	(புலி வழங்கு காடு)
28. nirai niraipu niraipu	நிரை நிரைபு நிரைபு	(புலி வழங்கு பொருப்பு)
29. nērpū nēr nēr	நேர்பு நேர் நேர்	(பாம்பு வாழ் கான்)
30. nērpū nēr nirai	நேர்பு நேர் நிரை	(பாம்பு வாழ் தெறி)
31. nērpū nēr nērpū	நேர்பு நேர் நேர்பு	(பாம்பு வாழ் காடு)
32. nērpū nēr niraipu	நேர்பு நேர் நிரைபு	(பாம்பு வாழ் பொருப்பு)
33. nērpū nirai nēr	நேர்பு நிரை நேர்	(பாம்பு வரு கான்)
34. nērpū nirai nirai	நேர்பு நிரை நிரை	(பாம்பு வரு தெறி)
35. nērpū nirai nērpū	நேர்பு நிரை நேர்பு	(பாம்பு வரு காடு)
36. nērpū nirai niraipu	நேர்பு நிரை நிரைபு	(பாம்பு வரு பொருப்பு)
37. nērpū nērpū nēr	நேர்பு நேர்பு நேர்	(பாம்பு போகு கான்)
38. nērpū nērpū nirai	நேர்பு நேர்பு நிரை	(பாம்பு போகு தெறி)
39. nērpū nērpū nērpū	நேர்பு நேர்பு நேர்பு	(பாம்பு போகு காடு)
40. nērpū nērpū niraipu	நேர்பு நேர்பு நிரைபு	(பாம்பு போகு பொருப்பு)
41. nērpū niraipu nēr	நேர்பு நிரைபு நேர்	(பாம்பு வழங்கு கான்)
42. nērpū niraipu nirai	நேர்பு நிரைபு நிரை	(பாம்பு வழங்கு தெறி)
43. nērpū niraipu nērpū	நேர்பு நிரைபு நேர்பு	(பாம்பு வழங்கு காடு)
44. nērpū niraipu niraipu	நேர்பு நிரைபு நிரைபு	(பாம்பு வழங்கு பொருப்பு)
45. niraipu nēr nēr	நிரைபு நேர் நேர்	(களிற்று வாழ் கான்)

46. niraipu nēr nirai	நிரைபு நேர் நிரை	(களிறு வாழ் நெறி)
47. niraipu nēr nērpū	நிரைபு நேர் நேர்பு	(களிறு வாழ் காடு)
48. niraipu nēr niraipu	நிரைபு நேர் நிரைபு	(களிறு வாழ் பொருப்பு)
49. niraipu nirai nēr	நிரைபு நிரை நேர்	(களிறு வரு கான்)
50. niraipu nirai nirai	நிரைபு நிரை நிரை	(களிறு வரு நெறி)
51. niraipu nirai nērpū	நிரைபு நிரை நேர்பு	(களிறு வரு காடு)
52. niraipu nirai niraipu	நிரைபு நிரை நிரைபு	(களிறு வரு பொருப்பு)
53. niraipu nērpū nēr	நிரைபு நேர்பு நேர்	(களிறு போகு கான்)
54. niraipu nērpū nirai	நிரைபு நேர்பு நிரை	(களிறு போகு நெறி)
55. niraipu nērpū nērpū	நிரைபு நேர்பு நேர்பு	(களிறு போகு காடு)
56. niraipu nērpū niraipu	நிரைபு நேர்பு நிரைபு	(களிறு போகு பொருப்பு)
57. niraipu niraipu nēr	நிரைபு நிரைபு நேர்	(களிறு வழங்கு கான்)
58. niraipu niraipu nirai	நிரைபு நிரைபு நிரை	(களிறு வழங்கு நெறி)
59. niraipu niraipu nērpū	நிரைபு நிரைபு நேர்பு	(களிறு வழங்கு காடு)
60. niraipu niraipu niraipu	நிரைபு நிரைபு நிரைபு	(களிறு வழங்கு பொருப்பு)

In general, any two of the 64 **mū-v-acai-c-cīr** in a row would produce a line known as the **vañci aṭi**.²⁸ For example, வினைநவின்ற பேர்யானை (*matu:47*) is a **vañci** line, in which the feet are of the patterns **nirai-nirai-nēr** (வினை-நவின்-ற) and **nēr-nēr-nēr** (பேர்-யா-னை). Notice that they are **veñcīr**. Similarly, in தொடித்தோட்கை துடுப்பாக (*matu:34*) which is also a **vañci** line, the first foot is a **veñcīr** of the pattern **nirai-nēr-nēr** (தொடித்-தோட்-கை), whereas the second is a **veñcīr** of the pattern **nirai-nēr-nēr** (துடுப்-பா-க).

However, only the 60 **mū-v-acai-c-cīr** designated as the **vañci uriccīr** mentioned above are responsible for producing the meter called **vañci**. For example, விழுச்சூழிய விளங்கோடைய (*matu:43*) is a **vañci** line,

²⁸ Nacc:44, cey.45. The line obtains the name **cama-nilai-vañci aṭi**. The line with three such feet is called a **viya-nilai-vañci aṭi** (cf. Nacc:44, cey.47).

in which both feet are **vañci uriccīr** of the pattern **nirai-nēr-nirai**, and they combine to produce the **vañci** meter. Similarly, in the **vañci** line வினைமாட்சிய விரைபுரவியொடு (*puṛa.16:1*), the two feet with the patterns **nirai-nēr-nirai** (வினை-மாட்-சிய) and **nirai-nirai-niraipu** (விரை-புர-வியொடு) produce the **vañci** meter.

Ten of the 60 **vañci uriccīr** are permissible in an **ācīriyappā** to occur in a line where the other feet are **ācīriya uriccīr** or **iyaṛcīr**.²⁹ They are **nēr-nēr-nirai**, **nirai-nēr-nirai**, **nēr-nēr-nērpū**, **nirai-nēr-nērpū**, **nēr-nēr-niraipu**, **nirai-nēr-nērpū**, **nērpū-nēr-nēr**, **nērpū-nirai-nēr**, **niraipu-nēr-nēr**, and **niraipu-nirai-nēr**. An example is நலம்பெறு கலிங்கத்துக் குறங்கின்மிசை அசைஇய தொருகை (*tiru:109*), in which குறங்-கின்-மிசை is of the pattern **nirai-nēr-nirai**.

aṭi (line)

A line in a poem is known by the term **aṭi**. A standard line is defined as that which is composed of four metrical feet.³⁰

Types of Lines

The various types of lines recognized are **kuraḷ aṭi**, **cintaṭi**, **aḷavaṭi**, **neṭil aṭi**, **kaḷi neṭil aṭi**, **vañci aṭi**, **iyaṛcīr-veḷ-aṭi**, **coṛcīr aṭi**, and **muṭukiyaḷ aṭi**. Among them, the **kuraḷ aṭi**, **cintaṭi**, **aḷavaṭi**, **neṭil aṭi**, **kaḷi neṭil aṭi**, and **vañci aṭi** are named on the basis of the number of letters (**eḷuttu**) or feet (**cīr**) they contain. The others, **iyaṛcīr-veḷ-aṭi**, **coṛcīr aṭi**, and **muṭukiyaḷ aṭi**, obtain their names on the basis of the types of letters and feet they contain. These lines are discussed next.

²⁹ Nacc:34, cey.31; Pē:171-172, cey.343.

³⁰ Nacc:35, cey.32.

Two Conventions of Grading an aṭi

Just like in the case of metrical feet (**cīr**), two different conventions provide different ways of considering an **aṭi**. One school views **aṭi** as containing so many letters (**eḷuttu**) while the other views it as composed of so many metrical feet. Vowelless consonants (**orru**), āytam (**h**), and the extra-short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram**) are not taken into account when an **aṭi** is described in terms of the number of **eḷuttu** in it.³¹ The **murriyal ukaram** is taken into account for naming an **aṭi** based on its letters.

When a line is construed in terms of the countable letters it contains, it is referred to as a **kaṭṭalai aṭi**, whereas the line which is graded in terms of the number of metrical feet it is made up of is called a **cīr vakai aṭi**.³²

Both conventions have been understood as saying the same thing in different ways.³³ However, the convention which construes a line as composed of so many metrical feet seems to allow for more letters and feet per line. This is demonstrated later.

Types of Lines (aṭi) in Terms of Letters (eḷuttu)

The convention which evaluates a line in terms of the letters, ordains that a standard line has four metrical feet. The line is a **kuraḷ aṭi** if it contains a minimum of four and a maximum of six letters (**eḷuttu**). If the

³¹ Nacc:43, cey.44.

³² One may note at this point that one of the later meters, the **kaṭṭalai-k-kali-t-turai**, echoes the term **kaṭṭalai**. In a poem composed in this meter, a line beginning with a **nēr acai** contains sixteen countable letters and a line beginning with a **nirai acai** contains seventeen countable letters. The verses in the text *Tirukkōvaiyār* are in this meter.

³³ Naccinārkkinīyar's commentary on cey.36-40.

line contains seven to nine **eḷuttu** it is a **cintaṭi**. If it contains ten to fourteen **eḷuttu** it is a **nēraṭi** or an **aḷavaṭi**. It is a **neṭil aṭi** if it contains fifteen to seventeen **eḷuttu**. And, it is a **kaḷi neṭil aṭi** if it contains eighteen to twenty **eḷuttu**. Examples provided by the commentators are reproduced here:

பேர்ந்து பேர்ந்து சார்ந்து சார்ந்து (pērntu pērntu cārntu cārntu)

This is a **kuraḷ aṭi** because it contains four **eḷuttu**: பே பே சா சா

நீர்வாய் கொண்டு நீண்ட நில (nīrvāy koṇṭu nīṇṭa nīla)

This is a **cintaṭi** because it contains seven **eḷuttu**: நீ வா கொ நீ ட நீ ல

நன்மணங் கமழும் பன்னெல் லூர (naṇmaṇaṅ kamaḷum paṇṇel lūra)

This is a **nēraṭi** because it contains ten **eḷuttu**: ந ம ண க ம மு ப னெ லூ ர

அணிநடை யசைஇய வரியமை சிலம்பின்

(aṇinaṭai yacaiya variyamai cilampin)

This is a **neṭil aṭi** because it contains fifteen **eḷuttu**:

அ ணி ந டை ய சை இ ய வ ரி ய மை சி ல பி

நளிமுழவு முழங்கிய வணிநிலவு தயங்குநக

(naḷimuḷavu muḷaṅkiya vaṇinilavu tayaṅkunaka)

This is a **kaḷi neṭil aṭi** because it contains eighteen **eḷuttu**:

ந ளி மு ழ வு மு ழ கி ய வ ணி நி ல வு த ய ந க

Types of Lines (aṭi) in Terms of Metrical Feet (cīr)

By the other convention, a line made up of two metrical feet is called a **kuraḷ aṭi**; that with three feet is a **cintaṭi**; with four feet, an **aḷavaṭi**; with five feet, a **neṭil aṭi**. A line made up of more than five feet is a **kaḷi neṭil aṭi**. Examples:

ஓங்குதலை வியன்பரப்பின் ōṅkutaḷai viyanparappin (*matu:1*)

This is a **kuraḷ aṭi** with two feet. But note that it has eight **eḷuttu**.

பந்த ரந்தரம் வேய்ந்து panta rantaram vēyntu (*pati.51:16*)

This is a **cintaṭi** with three feet. Note that it has only six **eḷuttu**.

துளங்குநீர் வியலகங் கலங்கக் கால்பொர

tuḷaṅkunīr viyalakaṅ kalaṅkak kālpora (*pati.51:1*)

This is an **aḷavaṭi** with four feet.

என்பொடு தடிபடு வழியெல்லா மெமக்கீயு மன்னே

enpoṭu taṭipaṭu valiyellā memakkīyu manṇē (*pura.235:6*)

This is a **neṭil aṭi** with five feet.

நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா வறிவனை முந்துறீஇ

neṇiyarī ceṇikuṇi puritiri paṇiyā vaṇivaṇai muntuṇī (*kali.39:46*)

This is a **kali neṭil aṭi** with six feet. Note that it has twentythree **eḷuttu**.

Lines Which are Graded by the Number of Letters and Their Occurrence

The five types of lines, namely **kuraḷ aṭi**, **cintaṭi**, **nēraṭi**, **neṭilaṭi**, and **kali neṭilaṭi**, are proper for **ācīriyappā**.³⁴ In an **ācīriyappā**, even if any of these lines contains more or less than the number of letters it is supposed to have, it will not be discarded but will rather be recognized in terms of the number of metrical feet it is made up of.³⁵ Thus, in the final analysis, a line in an **ācīriyappā** could contain a minimum of four and a maximum of twenty letters.³⁶ An example is நெடுங்கொடிய நிமிர்தேரு நெஞ்சடைய புகன்மறவரும் (*pura.55:8*). This is a **kali neṭil aṭi** containing nineteen **eḷuttu**: நெ டு கொ டி ய நி மி தே ரு நெ ச டை ய புக ம ற வ ரு.³⁷

³⁴ Nacc:53, cey.52; Pē:200, cey.364.

³⁵ Nacc:53, cey.53.

³⁶ Iḷam:441-442, cey.359.

³⁷ The line under consideration is followed by the refrain என 'thus' in the poem.

There is no restriction on the sequence of occurrence of these lines in an **āciriyaṭṭā**. They can occur in any order.³⁸ An example is *puṇāṇūru* 187.

நாடா கொன்றே காடா கொன்றே *nāṭā koṇṇō kāṭā koṇṇō*

This is a **cintaṭi** with eight (*eḷuttu*).

அவலா கொன்றே மிசையா கொன்றே *avalā koṇṇō micaiyā koṇṇō*

This is a **nēraṭi** with ten *eḷuttu*.

எவ்வழி நல்லவ ராடவர் *evvaḷi nallava rāṭavar*

This is a **cintaṭi** with nine *eḷuttu*.

அவ்வழி நல்லை வாழிய நிலனே *avvaḷi nallai vāḷiya nilaṇē*

This is a **nēraṭi** with eleven *eḷuttu*.

A **kuraḷ aṭi** with six letters, **cintaṭi** (seven to nine letters), and an **aḷavaṭi** with a maximum of fourteen letters are permissible in a **vañcippā**.³⁹ For examples, see “**vañci aṭi**.”

The **cintaṭi** (seven to nine letters) and **aḷavaṭi** (ten to fourteen letters) occur in a **veṇṇpā** with some restrictions.⁴⁰ Occasionally, the **neṭil aṭi** (fifteen to seventeen letters) occurs in a **veṇṇpā**. But then, a **veṇṇīr** ending with a **nēr acai** (**nēr-nēr-nēr** etc.) is followed by a **veṇṇīr** or

³⁸ *Il*:443, *cey*.360.

³⁹ *Nacc*: 57, *cey*.57.

⁴⁰ An **iyarṇīr** ending with a **nēr acai** (**nēr-nēr** or **nirai-nēr**) should not be followed by an **iyarṇīr** beginning with a **nēr acai**; an **iyarṇīr** ending with a **nirai acai** (**nēr-nirai** or **nirai-nirai**) should not be followed by an **iyarṇīr** beginning with a **nirai acai** (*Ilam*:445, *cey*.364); a **veṇṇīr** should not be followed by a **veṇṇīr** beginning with a **nēr acai**. The first two situations would produce what is called an **āciriyaṭṭalai** and the last one would produce what is called the **veṇṇīr veṇ ṭalai**. (*Nacc*:61-62, *cey*.58).

களிறணைப்பக் கலங்கின காஅ
 தேரோடத் துகள்கெழுமின தெருவு
 மாமறுகலின் மயக்குற்றன வழி
 கலங்கழாஅலிற் றுறை கலக்குற்றன

There are lines where an entire metrical foot (**cīr**) could occur as refrain and they are **nēraṭi** (ten to fourteen letters), which occur in an **ācīriyappā**, **veṇpā**, or **kalippā**. Occasionally they occur in a **vañcippā** also. In the following examples, the refrain in each case is given in bold type:

(*kuṛu.216:1-2*), **ācīriyappā**:

அவரே கேடில் விழுப்பொருள் தருமார் பாசிலை
 வாடா வள்ளியங் காடிநந்தோரே

(*cīru:50*), **ācīriyappā**:

வருபுனல் வாயில் வஞ்சியும் வறிதே அதாஅன்று

(*puṛa.4:7-8*), **vañcippā**:

மாவே எறிபதத்தா னிடங்காட்டக்
 கறுழ்பொருத செவ்வாயான்

(*kali.7:15-16*), **kalippā**:

இவட்கே அலங்கிதழ்க் கோடல் வீயுகு பவைபோ
 லிலங்கே ரெல்வளை யிறையு ரும்மே

more than five metrical feet) by the later convention.

Lines Which are Graded by Metrical Feet and Their Occurrence

A line with three metrical feet often occurs as the penultimate line in an **ācīriyappā**. It is not forbidden to occur in the middle.⁴³ These lines are given in bold type in the following examples:

kuṟu.3:1-4

நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே வானினு முயர்ந்தன்று
நீரினும் ஆரள வின்றே சாரற்
கருங்கோற் குறிஞ்சிப் பூக்கொண்டு
பெருந்தே னிழைக்கு நாடனொடு நட்பே

pura.235:7-10

அம்பொடு வேல்துழை வழியெல்லாந் தானிற்கு மன்னே
நரந்த நாறுந் தன்கையாற்
புலவுநாறு மென்தலை தைவரு மன்னே
அருந்தலை யிரும்பாணர் அகன்மண்டைத் துளையுரிஇ

The line with three metrical feet, the last foot of which is made up of a single **acai** (**nēr**, **nirai**, **nēru**, or **niraipu**), forms the last line in a **veṇṇā**. As pointed out elsewhere, there are no classical Tamil poems which are solely in the **veṇṇā** meter.

A line with three metrical feet can conclude a **kalippā**, but is also allowed elsewhere in a **kalippā**.⁴⁴ *kali.103:26*, is an example illustrating the occurrence of a line with three feet in the middle of the poem. The line is given in bold type.

⁴³ Nacc:70, cey.68, 69.

⁴⁴ Nacc:71, cey.70.

எரிதிகழ் கணிச்சியோன் குடிய பிறைக்கண்
 உருவ மாலை போலக்
 குருதிக் கோட்டொடு குடர்வ லந்தன

In the same poem, the penultimate line has only three feet:

மாசில்வான் முந்நீர்ப் பரந்த தொன்னிலம்
 ஆளுங் கிழமையொடு புணர்ந்த
 எங்கோ வாழியரிம் மலர்தலை யுலகே

The last line in *kalittokai* 18 has only three feet: சென்ற இளமை தரற்கு.

A line with five metrical feet (*aiñcīraṭi*) is permissible in an *ācīriyappā*, *venṇā*, and *kalippā*.⁴⁵ An example is நலம்பெறு கலங்கத்துக் குறங்கின்மிசை அசைஇய தொருகை (*tiru:109*) which is in *ācīriyappā*. In *kali.33:27*, which is in *kalippā*, there are five feet: புரிந்துநீ எள்ளுங் குயிலையும் அவரையும் புலவாதி.

A line with six metrical feet (*arucīraṭi*) occurs in *ācīriyappā* and *kalippā*, and a line with four feet (*nēraṭi*) would normally precede it; the *arucīraṭi* would produce *ācīriyattaḷai* as well as *ven taḷai*.⁴⁶ One commentator, *Ḥampūraṇar*, cites *pura.235:2*, as an example of an *arucīraṭi* occurring in an *ācīriyappā*:

பெரியகட் பெறினே யாம்பாடத் தான்மகிழ்த் துண்ணு மன்னே
 nirai-nirai nirai-nēr nēr-nēr-nēr nēr-nirai nēr-nēr nēr-nēr

Here, the metrical binding among the first three feet is *ācīriyattaḷai*. The binding among the third, fourth, and fifth feet is *ven taḷai*. The binding

⁴⁵ Nacc:65, cey.63.

⁴⁶ *Ḥam:449*, cey.370; Nacc:66, cey.64; Pē:219, cey.376.

between the last two feet is *ācīriyattaḷai*. This line is preceded in the poem by சிறியகட் பெறினே யெமக்கீயு மன்னே, which has four feet.

Now, consider *kali.39:44-46* which is a *kalippā*:

நெய்த லிதழுண்கண் நின்கண்ணு கென்கண்மன்
எனவாங்கு
நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா அறிவனை முந்துநீஇ

Here, the last line has six feet. In this line, the metrical binding among the first four feet (நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா) is *ācīriyattaḷai*. The binding among the last three feet (பறியா அறிவனை முந்துநீஇ) is *veṇ taḷai*. This line is preceded by a line with four feet (நெய்த லிதழுண்கண் நின்கண்ணு கென்கண்மன்). The line which occurs as எனவாங்கு has to be treated separately. It is called an *aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi*, an utterance to be considered as a “paranthesis.” A discussion of *aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi* is included in the discussion of the structure of *kalippā* in this chapter.

vañci aṭi (vañci line)

A line is called *vañci aṭi* when it has two or three metrical feet and the minimum number of letters for a foot is three and the maximum is six.⁴⁷ When there are three feet, one of them is referred to as refrain (*kūṇ*). This means that a *vañci* line can contain anywhere from six to twelve *eḷuttu*. This type of line is proper for a *vañcippā* and occurs occasionally in an *ācīriyappā*. For example, தூங்குகையான் ஓங்குநடைய (*pura.22:1*) is a *vañci* line. The number of *eḷuttu* in this line is seven: தூ கை யா ஓ ந டை ய. Similarly, புனல்வாயிற் பும்பொய்கைப் (*pati.13:8*) has

⁴⁷ Nacc:44, cey.45-47.

seven letters: பு ன வா யி பூ பொ கை; ஒலிதெங்கி னிமிழ்மருதிற் (*pati.13:7*) has nine: ஒ லி தெ கி னி மி ம ரு தி. In பாடல்சான்ற விறல்வேந்தனும்மே (*pura.11:7*), there are ten **eḷuttu**: பா ட சா ற வி ற வே த னு மே; and, in நிலைக்கொராஅ இலக்கம்போன்றன (*pura.4:11*), there are eleven: நி லை கொ ரா அ இ ல க போ ற ன. In *patiṟruppattu 13*, which is basically an **ācīriyappā**, there are **vañci** lines: தொறுத்தவய லாரல்பிறழ்நவும் (*pati.13:1*) has eleven **eḷuttu**: தொ று த வ ய லா ர பி ற ந வு; ஏறுபொருதசெறு வுழாதுவித்துநவும் (*pati.13:2*) has twelve: ஏ பொ ரு த செ று வு ழா வி து ந வு; and களிறு கதவெறியாச் சிவந்துராஅய் (*pura.4:10*) also has twelve: க ளி க த வெ றி யா சி வ து ரா அ.

muṭukiyal aṭi (“fast line”)

Lines with seven feet (**eḷucīraṭi**) are normally filled with short syllables, a process or feature known as **muṭuku-iyal**. This type of line is known as the **muṭukiyal aṭi**; it is proper for a **paripāṭal** and occurs also in a **kalippā**. A **muṭukiyal aṭi** produces a mixture of **ācīriyam** and **veṇpā** meters.⁴⁸

Lines with four, five, or six feet also can be filled with short syllables. They do not occur in an **ācīriyappā** or a **veṇpā**, but do occur to produce **ācīriyam** and **veṇpā** meters within a **kalippā**.⁴⁹ For example, *kali.103:42-47*, is a section in the **veṇpā** meter. The line with four feet exhibiting **muṭukiyal** is given in bold type:

இரிபெழு பதிர்பதிர் பிகந்துடன் பலர்நீங்க
வரிபரி பிறுபிறுபு குடர்சோரக் குத்தித்தன்

⁴⁸ Iḷam:448, cey.427; Nacc:68, 148, cey.66, 122.

⁴⁹ Iḷam:450, cey.373; Nacc:6, 8, cey.67; Pē:304, 434.

... ..

திரிதருங் கொல்களிறும் போன்ம்

In *kali.39:46-47*, lines with six and five feet occur producing *muṭukiyaḷ* in *ācīriyam* and *veṇṇā* meters.

நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா அறிவனை முந்தறிஇ
தகைமிகு தொகைவகை யறியுஞ் சான்றவ ரினமாக

iyarcīr vellāṭi

A line is called an *iyarcīr vellāṭi* when an *iyarcīr* ending with a *nēr acai* (*nēr-nēr* or *nirai-nēr*) is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a *nirai acai*, or when an *iyarcīr* ending with a *nirai acai* (*nēr-nirai* or *nirai-nirai*) is followed by a foot beginning with a *nēr acai*.⁵⁰ It is called so because its feet which are *iyarcīr* produce a metrical binding called *veṇ taḷai*. An *iyarcīr vellāṭi* is permissible in an *ācīriyappā*, and there it is interspersed with a certain line (*ācīriya aṭi*) which produces a certain metrical binding (*ācīriya-t-taḷai*). Consider for example *kuru.12:1-3*.

எறும்பி யளையிற் குறும்பல் சுனைய
nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nirai-nēr

வுலைக்கல் லன்ன பாறை யேறிக்
nirai-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nēr

கொடுவி லெயினர் பகழி மாய்க்கும்
nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nēr-nēr

The first line is an *iyarcīr vellāṭi* and the second is an *ācīriya aṭi* which produces *ācīriyattaḷai*.

⁵⁰ Nacc:64, cey.62.

corcīr-aṭi

The **corcīr aṭi** is a line (**aṭi**) in which there is a word (**col**) which functions as a metrical foot (**cīr**). Any one of the following would be a **corcīr aṭi**: a line in which the feet are involved in a reckoning, as if in an exposition; a line in which there are less than four feet or where a foot has insufficient number of **acai**; a line in which a single **acai** (**nēr**, **nirai**, **nērpū**, or **niraipu**) stands alone as the line's first foot as refrain without being joined with the following foot and the lone **acai** is called an **oliyacai**; or a line in which a foot stands alone at the end but is combined with the next line to make sense, and the lone foot gets the name **valiyacai**.⁵¹ This type of line, **corcīr aṭi**, is proper to a **paripāṭal**.⁵²

In *pari.3:4-9*, the reckoning type of **corcīr** lines are found:

தீவளி விகம்பு நிலனி ரைந்து

‘the Five, namely, fire, wind, sky, earth, and water’

ஞாயிறுந் திங்களு மறனு மைவரும்

‘the sun, moon, Aṇṇ, and the Five’

திதியின் சிறரும் விதியின் மக்களும்

‘the children of Titi and the children of Viti’

மாசி லெண்மரும் பதினொரு கபிலரும்

‘the blemishless Eight and the eleven Kapilars’

தாமா விருவருந் தருமனு மடங்கலும்

‘the Two, Tarumaṇ and the Lion’

⁵¹ Iḷam:488, cey.428; Nacc:148, cey.123; Pē:304, cey.434.

⁵² Iḷam.487, 427. They are also found elsewhere: e.g., *pati.24:6-7*.

முவே முலகமு முலகினுண் மன்பதும்
 ‘the twentyone worlds and the lives in these worlds’

In *pari.2:65-68*, each line has less than four feet whereas the lines preceding and following them have four feet each:

திகழொளி யொண்கடர் வளப்பாடு கொளலும் (four feet)
 தின்னுரு புடனுண்டி (two feet)
 பிற ருடம் படுவாரா (three feet)
 தின்னெடு புரைய (two feet)
 அந்தணர் காணும் வரவு (three feet)
 வாயடை யமிர்ததின் மனத்தகத் தடைத்தர (four feet)

In *pari.4:25-32*, the first **acai** தின் makes the lines qualify as a **corcīraṭi**, and is called **olīyacai**. Note that this type of single **acai** also receives the name **kūn**.

தின் வெம்மையும் விளக்கமு ஞாயிற்றுள
 தின் தண்மையும் சாயலும் திங்களுள
 தின் சுரத்தலும் வண்மையு மாரியுள

 தின் வருதலு மொடுக்கமு மருத்தினுள

In *pari.12:99*, the last **acai** ஆங்க ‘thus’ is a **valīyacai** and makes the line a **corcīraṭi**⁵³:

⁵³ Unfortunately, the traditional commentator’s cryptic usage of the term “**acai**” in this context, misleads one to underestimate the function of the word **āṅka**. See Parimēlaḷakar’s commentary on *pari.12:99*.

விசம்புகடி விட்டன்று விழவுப்புன லாங்க
இன்பமுங் கவினு மழுங்கன் மூதூர்

In *pari.19:50*, the last **acai** இவன் '(this) he' makes the line a **corcīraṭi** because it combines with the next line to make sense and becomes a **valiyacai**:

இந்திரன் பூசை யிவளக லிகையிவன்
சென்ற கவுதமன் சினனுறக் கல்ஹுரு

In *kali.33:16-19*, each line has a **valiyacai** at the end. Note that each of these **valiyacai** is composed of more than one **acai**. They are given in bold type:

நொந்து நகுவனபோல் நந்தின கொம்பு தைந்துள்ளி
யுகுவது போலுமென் நெஞ்சு எள்ளித்
தொகுபுடன் ஆடுவ போலுமயில் கையில்
உகுவன போலும் வளை என்கண்போல்
இகுபறல் வாரும் பருவத்தும் வாரார்

The Convention of Grading a Line by the Number of Metrical Feet

The convention which grades a line by the number of metrical feet it is composed of, allows for more letters per line, which technique, in turn, produces longer lines in poetry. Consider *matu:1*, which is segmented as containing two feet and so is a **kuraḷ aṭi** by this convention: ஓங்குதலை வியன்பரப்பின். If the number of **eluttu** in it are counted, the number would turn out to be eight: ஓ த லை வி ய ப ர பி. The number eight exceeds the number of maximum **eluttu** allowed in a **kuraḷ aṭi** by the convention which describes a line in terms of the number of **eluttu**. Note that there is no better way to segment this line, except to have it as consisting of two

metrical feet. Similarly, consider *kali.39:46*, which is segmented as composed of six metrical feet and so is a **kaḷi neṭil aṭi**: நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா வறிவனை முந்துறீஇ. If the number of **eḷuttu** in this line are counted, it would turn out to be twentythree: நெ றி ய றி செ றி கு றி பு ரி தி ரி ப றி யா வ றி வ னை மு து றீ இ. The number twentythree exceeds the number of maximum **eḷuttu** allowed in a **kaḷi neṭil aṭi** by the convention which describes a line in terms of the number of **eḷuttu**. This leads one to ascertain that the two conventions are different, one more rigid and the other more relaxed which eventually encouraged later poets to compose elaborate poems containing numerous number of metrical feet per line.⁵⁴

Metrical Binding (**taḷai**)

The way in which two adjacent metrical feet in a line hang together is crucial in a Tamil poem. The last **acai** of a metrical foot and the first **acai** of the following metrical foot are supposed to form a metrical binding which ultimately produces what is equivalent to rhythm. The tradition has a name for such binding which is **taḷai** ‘to bind; binding.’ Normally, attention is paid only to the metrical bindings that exist between adjacent feet within a line, while the binding between the last foot in a line and the first foot in the next line is not discussed.

Earlier Convention

The earlier convention seems to be more focused on individual feet and not to be overly concerned with classifying the various ways of

⁵⁴ One can refer to the **ācīriya viruttam** verses in Kampan’s *Irāmāvatāram* (“kam-parāmāyaṇam”) and later works of the *Piḷḷaittamiḷ* genre with longer lines in each **viruttam**.

binding two adjacent metrical feet. However, two major types of binding, **ācīriya-t-taḷai** and **veṇ-taḷai**, are recognized by this convention.⁵⁵ A third one, **kali-t-taḷai**, also is mentioned, but not as major. Unlike the later convention, the earlier one does not discuss **vañci-t-taḷai**.

The **ācīriyattaḷai** is obtained under two circumstances: when an **iyar̥cīr** ending with a **nēr** or a **nērupu** is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a **nēr** or a **nērupu**; or when an **iyar̥cīr** ending with a **nirai** or a **niraipu** is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a **nirai** or a **niraipu** respectively. Commentators note that the first one is known as **nēr onru ācīriya-t-taḷai** and the second, **nirai onru ācīriya-t-taḷai**.

The **veṇ-taḷai** is also obtained under two circumstances. One of them is a contrast to the **ācīriyattaḷai**: if an **iyar̥cīr** ending with a **nēr** is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a **nirai** or if an **iyar̥cīr** ending with a **nirai** is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a **nēr**. The metrical binding then is called **iyar̥cīr veṇ taḷai**. The second type of **veṇ taḷai** is obtained when a **veṇcīr** is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a **veṇcīr** or an **iyar̥cīr** beginning with a **nēr**. The binding between the two feet is then called **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai**.⁵⁶

A metrical binding contrasting both **ācīriyattaḷai** and **veṇ taḷai** is the **kalittaḷai**. As a contrast to the **veṇ taḷai**, it is obtained in the following way: when a **veṇcīr** is followed by a metrical foot beginning with a **veṇcīr** that starts with a **nirai**. As a contrast to the **ācīriyattaḷai**, it is obtained when an **ācīriya uriccīr** ending with a **nirai** is followed by a **veṇcīr** beginning with a **nirai**.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Nacc:55-56, 65, cey.56, 63.

⁵⁶ Ḵam:445, cey.364; Nacc:61, cey.58.

⁵⁷ Nacc:63, cey.60; Pē:214, cey.372.

pattern of the first cīr	following cīr	name of the taḷai
nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr	nēr oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nirai-nēr	nēr-nirai	nēr oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nērpū-nēr	nērpū-nēr	nēr oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
niraipu-nēr	nērpū-nēr	nēr oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nēr-nērpū	nēr-nēr	nēr oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nirai-nērpū	nēr-nēr	nēr oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai

(In making this taḷai, the first foot can have only these six patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first acaī should be nēr or nērpū.)

nēr-nirai	niraipu-nēr	nirai oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nirai-nirai	niraipu-nēr	nirai oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nēr-niraipu	nirai-nēr	nirai oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai
nirai-niraipu	nirai-nēr	nirai oṇṇu āciriya t taḷai

(In making this taḷai, the first foot can have only these four patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first acaī should be nirai or niraipu.)

nēr-nēr	nirai-nēr	īyaṇcīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nēr	nirai-nēr	īyaṇcīr veṇ taḷai
nēr-nirai	nēr-nēr	īyaṇcīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nirai	nēr-nēr	īyaṇcīr veṇ taḷai

(In making this taḷai, the first foot can have only these four patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first acaī should not be the same as the last acaī of the first foot.)

nēr-nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr	veṇcīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nēr-nēr	nēr-nērpū	veṇcīr veṇ taḷai

nirai-nirai-nēr	nēr-nirai	veṇṇīr veṇ taḷai
nēr-nirai-nēr	nēr-niraipu	veṇṇīr veṇ taḷai
nēr-nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr-nēr	veṇṇīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr-nirai	veṇṇīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nirai-nēr	nēr-nirai-nēr	veṇṇīr veṇ taḷai
nēr-nirai-nēr	nēr-nirai-nēr	veṇṇīr veṇ taḷai

(In making this **taḷai**, the first foot can have only these four patterns, whereas the following foot can be composed of two or three **acai** with the only condition that its first **acai** should be **nēr** like the last **acai** of the first foot.)

nēr-nēr-nēr	nirai-nēr-nēr	kalittaḷai
nirai-nēr-nēr	nirai-nēr-nirai	kalittaḷai
nirai-nirai-nēr	nirai-nirai-nēr	kalittaḷai
nēr-nirai-nēr	nirai-nirai-nēr	kalittaḷai
nēr-nirai	nirai-nēr-nēr	kalittaḷai
nirai-nirai	nirai-nēr-nēr	kalittaḷai
nērpu-nirai	nirai-nēr-nēr	kalittaḷai
niraipu-nirai	nirai-nēr-nēr	kalittaḷai

(In making this **taḷai**, the first foot can have only these eight patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with two conditions: that its first **acai** should always be **nirai**; and that when the first foot has only two **acai** ending with **nirai**, the following foot should be a **veṇṇīr** beginning with **nirai**.)

The above dicussed convention undergoes a change in post-classical period.

Later Convention

In a later convention, which is not very different from the earlier one, seven types of **taḷai** are distinctly recognized: **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai**, **nirai onru āciriya-t-taḷai**, **iyaṛcīr veṇ-taḷai**, **veṇcīr veṇ-taḷai**, **kalittaḷai**, **onriya vañci-t-taḷai**, and **onrā vañci-t-taḷai**. Note that here two types of **vañci-t-taḷai** are distinguished. Also, in considering the **taḷai**, the type of the first **cīr** (whether an **iyaṛcīr**, **āciriya uriccīr**, **veṇcīr**, or **vañciccīr**) seems to be most important whereas the type of the following **cīr** is not as crucial as its first **acai** (Yāpparunkalakkārikai:10).

pattern of the first cīr	following cīr	name of the taḷai
nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr	nēr onru āciriya t taḷai
nirai-nēr	nēr-nēr	nēr onru āciriya t taḷai

(In making this **taḷai**, the first foot can have only these two patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first **acai** should be **nēr**.)

nēr-nirai	nirai-nēr	nirai onru āciriya t taḷai
nirai-nirai	nirai-nēr	nirai onru āciriya t taḷai

(In making this **taḷai**, the first foot can have only these two patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first **acai** should be **nirai**.)

nēr-nēr	nirai-nēr	iyaṛcīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nēr	nirai-nēr	iyaṛcīr veṇ taḷai
nēr-nirai	nēr-nēr	iyaṛcīr veṇ taḷai
nirai-nirai	nēr-nēr	iyaṛcīr veṇ taḷai

(In making this **tałai**, the first foot can have only these four patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first **acai** should not be similar to the last **acai** of the first foot.)

nēr-nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr-nēr	veñcīr veñ tałai
nirai-nēr-nēr	nēr-nēr-nirai	veñcīr veñ tałai
nirai-nirai-nēr	nēr-nirai-nēr	veñcīr veñ tałai
nēr-nirai-nēr	nēr-nirai-nēr	veñcīr veñ tałai

(In making this **tałai**, the first foot can have only these four patterns, whereas the following foot can have any pattern with the only condition that its first **acai** should be **nēr** like the last **acai** of the first foot.)

nēr-nēr-nēr	nirai-nēr-nēr	kalittałai
nirai-nēr-nēr	nirai-nēr-nirai	kalittałai
nirai-nirai-nēr	nirai-nirai-nēr	kalittałai
nēr-nirai-nēr	nirai-nirai-nēr	kalittałai

(In making this **tałai**, the first foot can have only these four patterns, whereas the following **cīr** can have any pattern with two conditions: that its first **acai** should always be **nirai**; and that when the first **cīr** has only two **acai**, the following foot should be a **veñcīr**.)

nēr-nēr-nirai	nirai-nēr-nēr	onṛiya vañci t tałai
nirai-nēr-nirai	nirai-nēr-nirai	onṛiya vañci t tałai
nirai-nirai-nirai	nirai-nirai-nēr	onṛiya vañci t tałai
nēr-nirai-nirai	nirai-nirai-nēr	onṛiya vañci t tałai
nēr-nēr-nirai	nēr-nēr-nēr	onṛā vañci t tałai
nirai-nēr-nirai	nēr-nēr-nirai	onṛā vañci t tałai
nirai-nirai-nirai	nēr-nirai-nēr	onṛā vañci t tałai
nēr-nirai-nirai	nēr-nirai-nēr	onṛā vañci t tałai

(In making the **vañcittaṭai**, the first foot can have any of the 60 patterns designated earlier as the **vañci uriccīr**, and the following foot can also have any of those patterns.)

Metrical Bindings (taḷai), Meters (pā), and Lines (aṭi)

In general, the **āciriyaṭṭaḷai** and **iyarṇīr veṇ taḷai** are proper to an **āciriyaṭṭā**. The **iyarṇīr veṇ taḷai** and **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai** are proper to a **veṇṭpā**. The **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai** and the **āciriya-t-taḷai** are proper to a **kalippā**. The **vañcittaḷai** infrequently occurs in a **kalippā**.⁵⁸ There are some restrictions with regard to the metrical bindings within a line.

When the metrical binding is brought about by the various **āciriya uriccīr**, four of the latter do not occur in a row, because such a sequence would result in a sound (**ōcai**) called **tūṅkal ōcai** ‘suspended sound.’ Therefore, the **āciriya uriccīr** have to be separated by an **iyarṇīr** to produce the proper **āciriyaṭṭā** meter.⁵⁹ The sound obtained would be quite pleasant even if two **nērpū** or **niraipu** occur in a line. The best situation would be to have an **āciriya uriccīr** ending with a **nirai** (**nērpū-nirai** or **niraipu-nirai**) in the beginning of the line and have it followed by an **iyarṇīr**.⁶⁰ Examples:

ஒங்குமலைப் பெருவிற் பாம்புஞாண் கொளிஇ (*pura.55:1*)
nērpū-nirai nirai-nēr nērpū-nēr nirai-nēr

உவவுமதி யுருவின் ஒங்கல் வெண்குடை (*pura.3:1*)
niraipu-nirai nirai-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nirai

⁵⁸ *Ilam*:445, 447-448, *cey*.364, 366-368.

⁵⁹ *Nacc*:54, *cey*.54.

⁶⁰ *Nacc*:54, *cey*.54; *Pē*:203, *cey*.366.

The **ācīriyattaḷai** and the **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai**, which is obtained when a **veṇcīr** is followed by a **veṇcīr** beginning with a **nēr acai**, do not occur in a **cintaṭi** (seven to nine letters) or **aḷavaṭi** (ten to fourteen letters) in a **veṇpā**. The **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai** specified here would produce what is called the **ceppal ōcai** ‘replying sound’ as well as the **tulḷal ōcai** ‘jumping sound’, and therefore does not occur in these specific lines.⁶¹ When this type of **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai** does occur in a **veṇpā**, the line becomes a **neṭil aṭi** (fifteen to seventeen letters) and is to be construed in terms of the number of metrical feet in it, not by the number of letters.⁶²

The **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** is permissible in an **ācīriyappā** and the best situation would be to separate the line producing the **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with a line whose metrical feet give rise to **ācīriyattaḷai**.⁶³ An example is *kuṟu.12:1-3*.

எறும்பி யளையிற் குறும்பல் சனைய
nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nirai-nēr
வுலைக்கல் லன்ன பாதற யேறிக்
nirai-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nēr
கொடுவி லெயினர் பகழி மாய்க்கும்
nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nirai-nēr nēr-nēr

The first line is an **iyarcīr vellāṭi** which produces the **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** and the second is an **ācīriya aṭi** which produces an **ācīriyattaḷai**.

The last metrical foot in a **veṇpā** always produces the **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** or **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai** when bound with its preceding foot. When a

⁶¹ Nacc:61, cey.58.

⁶² ḷam:445-446, cey.364; Nacc:62, cey.58.

⁶³ Nacc:64, cey.62.

nirai acai or a **niraipu acai** occurs as the **veṇṇpā**'s last foot, it is preceded by an **iyaṇcīr** ending with a **nēr** (nēr-nēr or nirai-nēr). Thereupon, it would bind with the preceding foot like a **nirai**. Similarly, when a **nēr acai** or a **nērpu acai** occurs as the **veṇṇpā**'s last foot, it would be preceded by an **iyaṇcīr** ending with a **nirai** (nēr-nirai or nirai-nirai). Then it binds with the preceding metrical foot like a **nēr**. When the penultimate foot in a **veṇṇpā** is a **veṇcīr** and so has three **acai** (nēr-nēr-nēr etc.), the last foot would be a **nēr acai** or a **nērpu acai**, not a **nirai** or a **niraipu**. The last foot then binds with the penultimate foot like a **nēr acai**.⁶⁴

The **kalittaḷai** obtained by binding an **iyaṇcīr** or an **āciriya uriccīr** ending with a **nirai** (nēr-nirai, nirai-nirai, nērpu-nirai, or niraipu-nirai) with the following **veṇcīr** beginning with a **nirai** (nirai-nēr-nēr or nirai-nirai-nēr) occurs in a **kalippā**, and the lines become longer types of **aḷavaṭi** (thirteen to fourteen letters), **neṭil aṭi** (fifteen to seventeen letters), or a **kali neṭil aṭi** (eighteen to twenty letters).⁶⁵ For example, *kali.39:1* is an **aḷavaṭi** with thirteen letters:

காமர் கடும்புனல் கலந்தெம்மோ டாடுவாள்
nēr-nēr nirai-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr nēr-nirai

⁶⁴ Nacc:75-76, cey.74, 75.

⁶⁵ Nacc:63, cey.59-60.

Similarly, *kali.120:4* is a **neṭil aṭi** with sixteen letters:

உரவுத்தகை மழுங்கித்தன் இடும்பையா லொருவனை
niraipu-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr nirai-nēr-nēr nirai-nirai

If an **iyarṇcīr** or an **āciriya uriccīr** ending with a **nirai** (**nēr-nirai**, **nirai-nirai**, **nērpū-nirai**, or **niraipu-nirai**) is followed by an **iyarṇcīr** beginning with a **nirai** (**nirai-nēr** or **nirai-nirai**) or a **veṇṇcīr** beginning with a **nēr** (**nēr-nēr-nēr** or **nēr-nirai-nēr**), the resulting **taḷai** is not **kalittaḷai**, but an **āciriyaṭṭaḷai** or **veṇṇ taḷai** and the resulting sound is not **tullaḷ** ‘jumping.’⁶⁶ However, such a line would occur in a **kalippā** and would be construed in terms of the number of metrical feet in it.⁶⁷ An example is *kali.25:1*, which would be a **neṭilaṭi** if the letters are taken into account, but is an **aḷavaṭi**, since it is construed in terms of the feet. In this line, the binding between the second and third feet is **nirai onru āciriya-t-taḷai**.

வயக்குறு மண்டிலம் வடமொழிப் பெயர்பெற்ற
nirai-nirai nēr-nirai nirai-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr

When an **iyarṇcīr** ending with a **nirai** (**nēr-nirai** or **nirai-nirai**) and a **veṇṇcīr** beginning with a **nēr** or **nirai** occur as the first two feet in a line, and are followed by a stack of **veṇṇcīr** providing **veṇṇ cīr veṇṇ taḷai**, some **tullaḷ ocai** ‘jumping sound’ is produced.⁶⁸ The line then is construed in terms of its metrical feet., and has more than one type of **taḷai**.⁶⁹ An example is *kali.35:1*.

⁶⁶ Nacc:63, cey.60.

⁶⁷ Nacc:63-64, cey.60-61.

⁶⁸ Nacc:63, cey.60.

⁶⁹ Iḷam:447, cey.367; Nacc:64, cey.61; Pē:215, cey.373.

மடியிலான் செல்வம்போல் மரன்நந்த அச்செல்வம்
 nirai-nirai nēr-nēr-nēr nirai-nēr-nēr nēr-nēr-nēr

Here, the metrical binding between the first two feet is **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai**. That between the second and third feet is **kalittaḷai**, and the one between the third and fourth feet is **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai**. As a corollary, in a **kali** line that is construed in terms of metrical feet, rather than in terms of letters, several **taḷai** would occur. An example is *kali.25:1*, which would be a **neṭil aṭi** containing fifteen letters or an **aḷavaṭi** composed of four feet:

வயக்குறு மண்டிலம் வடமொழிப் பெயர்பெற்ற
 nirai-nirai nēr-nirai nirai-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr

Here, the binding between the first two feet is **iyarcīr veṇ-taḷai**. That between the second and third feet is an **ācīriyattaḷai**. The one between the third and fourth feet is also an **ācīriyattaḷai**.

A mixture of **ācīriyattaḷai** and **veṇ taḷai** happens in a line with five feet (**aiñcīraṭi**) in **ācīriyappā**, **veṇpā**, and **kalippā**.⁷⁰ An example is *pura.235:7*, which is a line with five feet and in which there is a mixture of **ācīriyattaḷai** and **veṇ taḷai**:

அம்பொடு வேனுழை வழியெல்லாந் தானிற்கு மன்னே
 nēr-nērpū nēr-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr nēr-nēr-nēr nēr-nēr

Here, the first two metrical bindings are **ācīriyattaḷai**, whereas the third and the last are **veṇ taḷai**.

⁷⁰ *Ilam*:448, *cey*:369; *Nacc*:65, *cey*:63.

The predominant **taḷai** is **ācīriyattaḷai**, when a line with six feet (**arūcīraṭi**) occurs in an **ācīriyappā**, and the line is preceded by a line with four feet (**nēraṭi**).⁷¹ An example is *pura.235:2*.

பெரியகட் பெறினே யாம்பாடத் தான்மகிழ்ந் துண்ணு மன்னே
nirai-nirai nirai-nēr nēr-nēr-nēr nēr-nirai nēr-nēr nēr-nēr

Here, the metrical binding among the first three feet is **ācīriyattaḷai**. The binding among the third, fourth, and fifth feet is **veṇ taḷai**. The binding between the last two feet is **ācīriyattaḷai**. This line is preceded in the poem by சிறியகட் பெறினே யெமக்கீயு மன்னே, which has four feet.

When there is **ācīriyattaḷai** and/or **veṇ taḷai**, a line with six feet (**arūcīraṭi**) occurs in a **kalippā** and is preceded by a line with four feet (**nēraṭi**).⁷² In *kali.39:46*, which is a line with six feet, **ācīriyattaḷai** is produced between the first four feet while **veṇ taḷai** is produced between the last three feet:

நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா அறிவனை முந்தறீஇ
nirai-nirai nirai-nirai nirai-nirai nirai-nēr nirai-nirai nēr-nirai-nēr

⁷¹ *Iḷam:449, cey.370.*

⁷² *Nacc:66-67, cey.64; Pē:219, cey.376.*

pā (meter, poem)

The term **pā** refers to meter per se and only by metonymy refers to a poem. Traditional commentators refer to **pā** as a limb (**uruppu**) of a composition (**ceyyuḷ**) and define it as the continuation of **tūkku**, which refers to the duration of a cycle of rhythmic beats. Thus, **pā** as meter, is basically the continuation of the cycle of beats. Since **pā** is a component of a composition, its variety is recognized through various compositions. Four basic types of meter have been recognized in the tradition: **ācīriyam**, **vañci**, **veṇpā**, and **kali**.⁷³ Each **pā** is supposed to produce a characteristic sound which is termed **ōcai**. These different sounds are discussed later in this chapter under “**tūkku**.”

pā as “meter”

The meter **ācīriyam** is an elaborate one, with a sweet/pleasant sound and is employed in numerous lines which contain anywhere from four to twenty **eḷuttu** per line. The meter **vañci** has been recognized as the one with the behavior (**naṭai**) of the **ācīriyam**, and that which ends like an **ācīriyam**. The meter **veṇpā** is not like these two (**ācīriyam** and **vañci**) and has a different sound, **ceppal ōcai** ‘replying sound, stately sound.’ The meter **kali** has been identified as employing many **veṇṇīr** and, in fact, as a limb of the **veṇpā** meter.⁷⁴ All the variations of these meters are subsumed under two major types, namely **ācīriyam** and **veṇpā**.⁷⁵

⁷³ Nacc:131, cey. 105.

⁷⁴ Iḷam:473, cey.413.

⁷⁵ Nacc:132-133, cey.107-108.

An interesting analogy of these meters to people is also made in the tradition.⁷⁶ It is based on the social structure that was prevalent at the time of the traditional commentators. Kings, brahmins, merchants, and farmers are the four types of people drawn into this comparison.

The meter known as the **veṇṇpā** has the quality of the brahmins (**antaṇar nīrmai**) because it does not allow metrical bindings (**taḷai**) other than its own, which is **veṇ taḷai**, and does not occur in lines which vary too much in length. That is, the meter **veṇṇpā** is obtained purely by employing metrical feet which give rise to the binding known as the **veṇ taḷai** and the lines employing this meter do not permit any other meter nor vary much in length. The meter known as the **ācīriyam** has been recognized as having a stately nature (**araca-t-taṇmai**). It is similar to **veṇṇpā** but allows other metrical bindings besides its own, which is **ācīriyattaḷai**. Furthermore, it has a sweet sound and occurs elaborately. That is, a line employing **ācīriyattaḷai** may permit other types of metrical binding in it and the meter prevails in a long poem. The meter known as the **kali** has the quality of the merchants (**vaṇikar nīrmai**). It is similar to the **ācīriyam** and allows a few other metrical bindings besides its own, which is **kalittaḷai**. The **vañci** meter has the behavioral pattern of the farmers (**vēḷāṇ māntar iyalpiṇṇu**) because it occurs not in the standard **aḷavaṭi** (ten to fourteen letters), but in shorter lines like a **kuṇḷaṭi** (four to six letters) or a **cintaṭi** (seven to nine letters), and permits many types of metrical binding.

The **ācīriyam** is the most widely used meter in classical Tamil poetry. The shortest poem entirely in the **ācīriyam** meter has three lines (e.g., *aiṇkuṇṇūru* 121), while the longest has 782 lines (*maturaikkāñci*) and employs the **vañci** meter interspersed with the **ācīriyam**. With less frequency than the **ācīriyam**, **vañci** is a meter used predominantly in a

⁷⁶ Iḷam:472-473, cey.410.

few poems that end in the **ācīriyam** meter. Other meters, **veṇpā** and **kali**, do not prevail in an entire composition in classical Tamil poetry.

The **veṇpā** meter is used in songs (**pāṭṭu**) which are **neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu** ‘long song in **veṇpā** meter’, **kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu** ‘short song in **veṇpā** meter’, **kaikkiḷai** “one-sided love,” and **paripāṭṭu** ‘song that is quite accomodative’ and in satirical compositions (**aṅkata-c-ceyyuḷ**). In classical Tamil poetry, the **kuṟuveṇ pāṭṭu** and **neṭuveṇ pāṭṭu** occur as parts of the poems which employ the **kali** meter (e.g., *kali.106:11-14, 20-22, 23-25, 26-29, 31-33*). Poems employing the themes of unrequited love (**kaikkiḷai**) and satire (**aṅkatam**) are in the **ācīriyam** meter (e.g., *puṛaṇāṇūru* 83-85, 204). The anthology called *Paripāṭal* contains **paripāṭṭu** in which there is a mixture of all four meters, **ācīriyam**, **vañci**, **veṇpā**, and **kali** (e.g., *pari.3:1-2; 5:19-21; 20:110-111; 1:60*).

A mixture of the **veṇpā** and **ācīriyam** meters is permissible in a poem that expresses unrequited love (**kaikkiḷai**). Actually, this mixture is known as **maruṭpā** which begins in the **veṇpā** meter and ends in the **ācīriyam** meter. Classical Tamil poetry does not have an example.

pā as “poem”

Except for some which are entirely in the **ācīriyam** meter, all classical Tamil poems employ more than one meter in their lines. It must be noted that an entire composition (**pā** or **pāṭṭu**) may be in just one meter (**pā**) or may contain sections which are in different meters. For example, *kuṟuntokai* 122 is in the **ācīriyam** meter; *puṛaṇāṇūru* 11 is mostly in the **vañci** meter but ends in the **ācīriyam**; *paripāṭal* 5 demonstrates a mixture of **ācīriyam** and **vañci** meters in lines 17-22; *paripāṭal* 18 has a mixture of **veṇpā** and **ācīriyam** in lines 49-56; *kalittokai* 11 has a mixture of **kali** and **ācīriyam** in lines 1-4.

paripāṭṭu and kalippā

The terms **paripāṭṭu** and **kalippā** do not refer to meters. Rather, they are types of poems which employ different kinds of meters such as the **ācīriyam**, **veṇṇpā**, and **kali**. They contain several components of which some are similar but vary in terms of their structure or content. These components are **taravu**, **eruttu**, **tāḷicai**, **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu**, **koccakam**, **arākam**, **eṇ**, **aṭai** or **aṭai-nilai-k-kilavi**, **taṇi-c-col**, **curitakam**, **pōkku**, **vaippu**, **vāram**, and **aṭakkiyal**.⁷⁷ These components are discussed next before the structures of **paripāṭṭu/paripāṭal** and **kalippā** are explained.

taravu and **eruttu** (“introduction; prelude”)

The components **taravu** and **eruttu** are similar. In general, the term **taravu** means ‘bringing’ while **eruttu** refers to the ‘nape.’⁷⁸ Traditional commentators explain that **taravu** is like the face of a song whereas **curitakam** ‘wrapping up, folding’ is like the feet, while **eruttu** lies there to receive the components like **tāḷicai**, **koccakam**, and **arākam** as a limb leaning on to the **taravu**.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ The earlier convention maintains subtle distinctions between some of these components. By the later convention, **taravu** and **eruttam** (< **eruttu**) are the same as are the **tāḷicai** and **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu**; **arākam** and **mutukiyal**; **eṇ**, **ampōtaraṅkam**, and **coṇcīr aṭi**; **taṇi-c-col** and **kūṇ**; and the **curitakam**, **pōkkiyal** (< **pōkku**), **vaippu**, **vāram**, and **aṭakkiyal** (*Yāpp-arunkalakkārikai*:103-104, Rule 30).

⁷⁸ The earlier convention is to understand them as separate items and the later is to take them as referring to the same item (quoted in U.V. Saminathier’s commentary on *paripāṭal*:xi; *Iḷam*:487, *cey*.426; *Nacc*:191, *cey*.152).

⁷⁹ *Iḷam*:487, *cey*.426; *Pē*:314-315, *cey*.444.

Both **taravu** and **eruttu** have been identified to occur in a **paripāṭṭu** while the earlier convention associates only **eruttu** with **paripāṭṭu**.⁸⁰ Further, the **eruttu** is optional in a **paripāṭṭu**.⁸¹ These components occur as the first part of a **paripāṭṭu** or a **kalippā** and the **eruttu** occurs after the **taravu** in a **paripāṭṭu** (e.g., *pari.1:1-5*; *kali.2:1-10*; *pari.1:6-13*). The **taravu** is supposed to have a minimum of four and a maximum of twelve lines.⁸² But, in classical Tamil poetry, the **taravu** has a minimum of three and a maximum of thirteen lines (e.g., *kali.16:1-4*; *25:1-12*; *149:1-3*; *75:1-13*). There is no specification found in traditional grammars for the length of an **eruttu**; commentator says that it has a minimum of two lines and a maximum of ten lines.⁸³ No meter is specified for these components.

tāḷicai and **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu** (“middle songs”)

The **tāḷicai** and **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu** are similar. They occur after the **taravu** and before **taṇiccol** and **curitakam**. In most cases, one or the other occurs in a **kalippā**. The **tāḷicai**, literally meaning ‘subdued tone’, is supposed to have a descending/receding sound (“*tālam paṭṭa ōcai*”) and is in the **ācīriyam** meter. It is either equal to or shorter than the **taravu** and, in general, has a minimum of two lines and a maximum of four lines (e.g., *kali.5:10-11*; *4:9-12*). In a certain type of **kalippā** called the **kocaka-k-kalippā**, the **tāḷicai** can have more than four lines (e.g., *kali.68:6-11*). In any case, there can be one, two, three, or four **tāḷicai** in a poem, and all the **tāḷicai** would focus on just one theme which is an expansion of what is

⁸⁰ *Ḵam*:486, *cey*.426.

⁸¹ *Nacc*:144, *cey*.121.

⁸² *Nacc*:157, *cey*.133.

⁸³ *Ḵam*:487, *cey*.426.

introduced in the taravu (e.g., *kali.108:26-29; 149:4-7, 8-11; 2:11-14, 15-18, 19-22; 106:34-36, 37-39, 40-42, 43-45*). The *tālicai* is sometimes referred to as an *iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu* because it occurs in the middle of a poem.⁸⁴

The *iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu* obtains its name which means ‘song standing in the middle’ because it occurs between the taravu and the curitakam (e.g., *kali.16:5-8, 9-12, 13-16*). It also is equal to or shorter than the *taravu* (e.g., *kali. 16:5-8, 9-12, 13-16; 75:14-17, 18-21, 22-25*). The meter here is *ācīriyam* or *veṇṇā*. The *iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu* which is similar to the *tālicai* in terms of focusing on one theme is in the *ācīriyam* meter (e.g., *kali.75:14-17, 18-21, 22-25*). It does not necessarily have to produce a subdued tone like the *tālicai* (e.g., *kali.75:14-17, 18-21, 22-25; kali.128:10-13, 14-17, 18-21; kali.137:8-12, 13-17, 18-22*). The *iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu* that occurs like a song (*pāṭṭu*) is in the *veṇṇā* meter and there can be more than one of this type in a *kalippā* (e.g., *kali.115:10-16; 108:9-14, 20-24, 35-44, 46-50, 52-56*). The longer type, called the *neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu* ‘long song in *veṇṇā* meter’, is supposed to have a maximum of twelve lines, while the shorter one, *kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu* ‘long song in *veṇṇā* meter’, has a minimum of two lines. Note that the *neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu* does exceed the limit of twelve lines (e.g., *kali.83:8-25*). Further, these songs allow four feet in their last line and metrical binding other than *veṇ tālai* (e.g., *kali.50:6-14, 15-17; 141:15-16; 64:24-25*).

⁸⁴ Pē:314, cey.444.

koccakam (“pleats”)

The component **koccakam** got its name on analogy.⁸⁵ The term basically refers to the several pleats in a garment. In prosody, it is a component which is similar to a **venpā** in terms of having its last line with three feet. However, it does not have to end like a **venpā** and does allow an **aiñcīraṭi** (line with five metrical feet), an **ācīriya aṭi**, **venpā aṭi**, **vañci aṭi**, **kali aṭi**, **corcīraṭi**, or **muṭukiyaḷ aṭi**.⁸⁶ For example, *kali.41:11* is an **aiñcīraṭi**; *kali.43:20* is an **ācīriya aṭi**; *kali.39:10* is a **venpā aṭi**; *kali.103:26, 60* are **vañci aṭi**; *kali.94:1, 3* are **corcīr aṭi**; and *kali.103:22-23; 104:42-43* are **muṭukiyaḷ aṭi**. Commentators say that **koccakam** is a component consisting of smaller or larger units, or a mixture of both. Furthermore, they add, it is not like the component **eṇ** which contains lines that are gradually shortened, but is composed of lines, feet, and bindings which vary.⁸⁷ It occurs after the **taravu** and before **taṇi-c-col** and **curitakam**, and there is always more than one **koccakam** in a poem occurring in more than one place (e.g., *pari.ti.1:6-21, 31-59; kali.39:7-10, 11-14, 15-18, 20-21, 22-25, 26-29, 31-32, 33-44; kali.41:5-38; kali.102:9-16, 25-27, 28-32*).

arākam (“rapid movement”)

The component called the **arākam** also obtained its name on analogy. Commentators note that **arākam** is like the process of adding something to gold to make it melt (**arākittal** ‘melting, loosening, rapid movement’). In prosody, it is a component recognized when a section is full of short letters (e.g., *kali. 102:17-20, 25; pari.1:14-25*). It occurs after the **koccakam**

⁸⁵ Commentators note that in their time the term **koccakam** was used as **koycakam**, pertaining to women’s garment (Nacc:191, cey.152; Pē:349, cey.464). It may also be noted that in Modern Tamil the term for the pleats in a women’s traditional garment is **kocuvam**.

⁸⁶ *ḷam*:486, cey.426; Nacc:146, cey.121; Pē:300, cey.433.

⁸⁷ Nacc:191, cey.152; Pē:349, cey.464.

and before **eṇ** (Nacc:144, 192; Pē:349) with a minimum of two and a maximum of six lines.⁸⁸

eṇ (“counts; groups”)

The term **eṇ** means ‘count.’ In prosody, the component **eṇ** comes after the **tāḷicai**. Normally it occurs as groups of lines which are strung together by alliteration (**toṭai** ‘stringing’).⁸⁹ Each group contains a certain number of counts (**eṇ**) and the length of each count gets shorter gradually, like receding waves. Different schools of thought seem to have existed with regard to how the lines are shortened in each group.⁹⁰ Note that all take the standard line (**aṭi**) to be composed of four metrical feet (**cīr**) per line.

According to one school, the **eṇ** are shortened as follows: first, by halving the number of lines (**aṭi**) and then by reducing the number of feet (**cīr**) in each line by one foot, at the same time doubling the number of lines. By this method, there would be two couplets with four metrical feet per line in the first count, and the second count would have four lines with four metrical feet per line followed subsequently by the third count with eight lines having three metrical feet per line and sixteen lines having two metrical feet per line.⁹¹

Another school sees lines in subsequent counts (**eṇ**) are shortened by half every time.⁹² By this method, the first count consists of two couplets, each couplet composed of two lines with four **cīr** each. The

⁸⁸ Iḷam:487, cey.426.

⁸⁹ Nacc:167, cey.145; Pē:326, cey.457.

⁹⁰ Iḷam:500, cey.448; Nacc:167, cey.145; Pē:326, cey.457.

⁹¹ Iḷam:500, cey.448.

⁹² Nacc:167, cey.145; Pē:326, cey.457.

second count would reflect a 50 percent cut in the structure of the couplet, having four lines with four *cīr* per line. The third count would reflect a further 50 percent shortening, having eight half-lines with two *cīr* per half-line. The last count would be further reduced by 50 percent, having sixteen quarter-lines with one *cīr* per quarter-line. Note that the tradition does not use the terms “half-line” and “quarter-line” which are provided for the purposes of the current volume. The tradition uses the term *aṭi* with respect to the the first two counts and describes the last two counts in terms of *cīr*. Accordingly, the first count is *īr-aṭi iraṇṭu* ‘two (counts) consisting of two *aṭi* (each).’ The second count is *ōr aṭi nāṅku* ‘four (counts) consisting of one *aṭi* (each).’ The third is *iru cīr eṭṭu* ‘eight (counts) consisting of two *cīr* (each).’ And the last one is *oru cīr patināru* ‘sixteen (counts) consisting of one *cīr* (each).’⁹³ The third and fourth counts can have just four and eight counts respectively instead of eight and sixteen so as to be called *iru-cīr nāṅku* and *oru-cīr eṭṭu*.⁹⁴

In order to understand the concept of the component *eṇ* in Tamil prosody, one also has to pay attention to the feet containing the alliteration. Then, one can see that in *eṇ*, the first group consists of two couplets with eight feet per couplet wherein the first and fifth feet in each couplet share an alliteration. Here, a count has two lines. The second group reflects a 50 percent reduction in the number of feet per count. Here, a count has one line, the second count has four lines where each line has four feet. The alliteration between the first feet of the first two lines is different from that which exists between the first feet of the last two lines. The third group has eight counts where each count has only two feet. Here, a count represents a half-line. One alliteration exists between the first feet in

⁹³ Pē:328-331, cey.458.

⁹⁴ Pē:331, cey.458.

counts one and three. Another alliteration exists between the first feet in counts five and seven. The last group has one foot per count and there are sixteen such counts. Here, a count represents a quarter-line. An alliteration exists between the first and fifth feet. The same or a different alliteration exists between the ninth and thirteenth feet.

The couplet which represents two counts and is composed of eight feet gets the name **pēreṇ** ‘large count.’ The group of four counts with four feet per line is **cirreṇ** ‘small count.’ The group of eight counts with two feet per count is called **iṭai eṇ** ‘middle count’ because it stands between the **pēreṇ** and **cirreṇ**. The last group of sixteen counts with just one foot per count is **aḷavu eṇ** ‘unit count, threshold count’.⁹⁵ It is also known as **cinṇam** ‘smallest’ because it reflects the gradual decrease in the number of feet that make up the component **eṇ**. Occasionally, the group of counts with two feet per line, whether there are eight or four counts in the group, is called a **cinṇam** (e.g., *kali.102:21-24*).

It is possible but not necessary to have all the four types of **eṇ** — **pēreṇ**, **cirreṇ**, **iṭai eṇ**, and **cinṇam** — in a poem. However, since the structure of the component **eṇ** is supposed to represent the receding nature of waves, the groups of lines should always reflect the gradual receding.⁹⁶ Therefore, it is possible to have all the four groups (**pēreṇ**, **cirreṇ**, **iṭai eṇ**, and **aḷavu eṇ/cinṇam**), or the first three (**pēreṇ**, **cirreṇ**, and **iṭai eṇ**), or the last two (**iṭai eṇ** and **aḷavu eṇ/cinṇam**), or the last one by itself (**aḷavu eṇ/cinṇam**) as in *kali.102:21-24*. But it is not possible to skip one or two groups at random to have just the first and last groups (**pēreṇ** and **aḷavu eṇ/cinṇam**) or just the second and the third (**cirreṇ** and **iṭai eṇ**), or the second and the fourth (**cirreṇ** and **aḷavu eṇ/cinṇam**).

⁹⁵ Nacc:167-168, cey.145; Pē:327, cey.457.

⁹⁶ Nacc:168-174, cey.146.

An example is here repeated from the commentary on the **poruḷatikāram** of the **Tolkāppiyam** by **Pēṛācīriyar** (pp.328-329):

வேள்வி யாற்றி விதிவழி யொழுகிய
தாழ்வி லந்தணர் தம்வினை யாயினை;

வினையி னீங்கி விழுத்தவஞ் செய்யு
முனைவர் தமக்கு முத்தி யாயினை;

This is the first group consisting of two couplets (or counts) with eight **cīr** per couplet. The first and fifth feet in each couplet share an alliteration, marked in bold type.

இலனென விகழ்ந்தோர்க் கில்லையு மாயினை;
யுளனென வுணர்ந்தோர்க் குளையு மாயினை;
யருவரு வென்போர்க் கவையு மாயினை;
பொருவற விளங்கிய போத மாயினை;

This is the second group, reflecting a 50 percent reduction in the number of **cīr** per count, so this group has four counts where each count has four **cīr**. The alliteration between the first feet of the first two counts is different from that which exists between the first feet of the last two counts. The counts are separated by a semicolon and the alliterations are marked in bold type.

பானிற வண்ணனி; பனிமதிக் கடவுணி;
நீனிற வருவுநீ; நிறமிசு கனலிநீ;
யறுமுக வொருவனி; யானிழற் கடவுணி;
பெறுதிரு வருவுநீ; பெட்பன வருவுநீ;

This is the third group which has eight counts in which each count has only two **cīr**. One alliteration exists between the first feet in counts one and three. Another alliteration exists between the first feet in counts five and seven. The counts are separated by a semicolon and the alliterations are marked in bold type.

மண்ணுநீ; விண்ணுநீ; மலையுநீ; கடலுநீ;
 யெண்ணுநீ; யெழுத்துநீ; யிரவுநீ; பகலுநீ;
 பண்ணுநீ; பாவுநீ; பாட்டுநீ; தொடருநீ;
 யண்ணுநீ; யமலநீ; யருளுநீ; பொருளுநீ

This is the last group which has one **cīr** per count and there are sixteen counts spread over four lines. The same alliteration exists between the first, fifth, ninth, and thirteenth **cīr**.

In *kali.102:21-24*, there is **cinnam** with two **cīr** per count. The counts are separated by a semicolon; alliterations are marked in bold type:

எழுந்தது துகள்;
 ஏற்றனர் மார்பு;
 கவிழ்ந்தன மருப்பு;
 கலங்கினர் பலர்

aṭai (“enclosed lone words”)

The component **aṭai** which is also known as **aṭai-nilai-k-kilavi** ‘word which stands enclosed’ gets its name because it is flanked by other

components.⁹⁷ It is called **taṇi-c-col** ‘lone word’ by the later convention because it could make up a metrical foot by itself in a line (e.g., *kali.75:26; pari.1:49, 61*). In fact, the **aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi** has more than one word in most cases (e.g., *kali.71:21*). In *ottāḷicai-k-kalippā*, there is only one **aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi** and it occurs after the *tāḷicai* and before the *curitakam* (e.g., *kali.2:23*). In most *ottāḷicai-k-kalippā*, the word **āṇka/āṇku** is the **aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi** or it occurs as part of the latter (*kali.99:17, 74:12, 75:26*). In other types of *kalippā*, the **aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi** occurs after the *taravu* and anywhere before the *curitakam*, and there could be more than one in a poem (e.g., *kali.50:18; 64:11, 26; 82:8; 105:23, 61, 70; 106:6, 15, 30, 46*). In *paripāṭal*, one or two **taṇi-c-col** occur in a poem (e.g., *pari.8:124, 20:40, 83, 95*).

curitakam (“folding”)

The **curitakam** ‘wrapping up, folding’ is the section that ends the subject matter of a *paripāṭal* in the *āciriyam* or *veṇpā* meter (e.g., *pari.1:62-65; 16:50-55*).⁹⁸ There can be more than one *curitakam* in a *paripāṭal* (e.g., *pari.1:50-54, 62-65*).

pōkku (“wrapping”)

The **pōkku** is like the **curitakam**. It is called **pōkku** because it states the intent and makes the composition reach an end without saying anything more.⁹⁹ It is also called **vaippu** ‘keeping, preserving’ because it collects and contains the subjects stated in *taravu* and *tāḷicai* (e.g.,

⁹⁷ Nacc:156, cey.132; Pē:315, cey.444.

⁹⁸ Ḵam:487, cey.426; Nacc:147, cey.121.

⁹⁹ Nacc:158, cey.136; Pē:315, cey.444.

kali.8:19-23).¹⁰⁰ The meter is **ācīriyam** or **veṇṇpā** (e.g., *kali.38:23-26; 22:19-22*). It is similar to **taravu** in structure and ends a **kalippā**, occasionally occurring in the middle also (e.g., *kali.39:20-21, 46-51*). It could have a minimum of two or three lines.¹⁰¹ In most cases, it is half as long as the **taravu** (e.g., *kali.4:22-25*) and occasionally, is longer than the **taravu** (e.g., *kali.16:18-22*). In classical Tamil poetry, the **curitakam** has a minimum of two and a maximum of seven lines (e.g., *kali. 8:19-20; 5:17-19; 4:22-25; 75:27-33*). It reiterates the subject matter of the **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu** (e.g., *kali.8:19-20; 5:17-19*) and expresses the intent (e.g., *kali.8:20-23*). It can contain the subject matter of the **taravu** (e.g., *kali.38:23-26*) but does not have to (e.g., *kali.54:16-20*).

vāram (“container”)

The **vāram** has a containing nature which is known by the term **aṭakkiyal**. It is similar to the **taravu**. One commentator explains that it contains everything expressed by the rest of the components in the poem,¹⁰² while another distinguishes **vāram** and **aṭakkiyal** by saying that **aṭakkiyal** gives one name and confines a god who has already been praised through numerous names, whereas **vāram** has lines which praise human beings as well.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Pē:315, cey.444.

¹⁰¹ Ṭam:496, cey.441; Nacc:159, cey.137; Pē:319, cey.449.

¹⁰² Pē:315, cey.444.

¹⁰³ Nacc:167, cey.144.

Structure of a **paripāṭal**

The **paripāṭal**, a type of song, is supposed to accommodate several kinds of lines (**aṭi**) and meters (**pā**) unlike the **kali**.¹⁰⁴ It has the components **taravu**, **eruttu**, **koccam**, **arākam**, **aṭakkiyal**, and **curitakam**, and its intended emotion is erotic love (**kāmam**). The themes of the song are descriptions of mountains, rivers, and towns and various playful activities that happen in those places.¹⁰⁵ Lines with seven metrical feet (**eḷucīraṭi**) filled with short syllables were introduced above as **muṭukiyaḷ aṭi**. The **muṭukiyaḷ aṭi** and **corcīraṭi** are proper to a **paripāṭal**.

Structure of a **kalippā**

The **kalippā** is of four basic types: **ottāḷicai-k-kali**, **kali veṇ pāṭṭu**, **koccam**, and **uraḷ kali**.

ottāḷicai-k-kali

ottāḷicai-k-kali gets its name because it contains the component called **ottāḷicai**.¹⁰⁶ It is subdivided into two varieties. One variety called the **ottāḷicai-k-kali** has four components: **taravu**, **tāḷicai** or **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu**, **aṭai**, and **pōkku** (e.g., *kali.74, 128*). In this, the **taravu** has a minimum of four and a maximum of twelve lines (e.g. *kali.124, 25*). Occasionally the **taravu** has thirteen lines (e.g., *kali.75*). The **tāḷicai** here have a minimum of two and a maximum of four lines (e.g., *kali.5, 4*). All the **tāḷicai** within a poem must be of equal length, justifying the name **ottāḷicaikkali** “**kali**

¹⁰⁴ Pē:297, 299, cey.430, 432.

¹⁰⁵ Nacc:144, cey.121; Pē:303, cey.433.

¹⁰⁶ Nacc:155, cey.130.

poem containing **talīcai** of equal length.” There are 58 such **ottālīcaikkali** in classical Tamil poetry: *kalittokai* 2-5, 8-11, 13-17, 20, 22, 25, 27, 28-31, 34, 35, 38, 44-46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 57-59, 66, 67, 69, 70-79, 99, 100, 121, 123, 124, 126-128, 132, 134, 135.¹⁰⁷

The other variety of **ottālīcai-k-kali** prays to the gods, and is of two kinds: **vaṇṇakam** and **oru pōku**. There is no **vaṇṇaka ottālīcai-k-kali**, and there is only one **oru pōku ottālīcai** in classical Tamil poetry: *kalittokai* 1, which is an invocation (**kaṭavuḷ vālittu**).

vaṇṇaka ottālīcai-k-kali and oru pōku ottālīcai-k-kali

The **vaṇṇaka ottālīcai k kali** is supposed to have four parts: **taravu**, **tālīcai**, **eṇ**, and **vāram**. The **taravu** here is composed of four, six, or eight lines, where each line has four metrical feet (**nēraṭi**). The **ottālīcai** are three in number of equal length and contain the same subject matter (**poruḷ**). These **tālīcai** are shorter than the **taravu**. In specific, they would have a minimum of three and a maximum of four lines.¹⁰⁸

The **oru pōku ottālīcai-k-kalippā** is of two kinds: **koccaka orupōku** and **ampōtaraṅkam**.¹⁰⁹

koccaka-oru-pōku

The **koccaka oru pōku** would have either **taravu** or **tālīcai**. It may have **eṇ**. The **taravu** may be elaborate without **aṭakkiyal** and end the **pā**

¹⁰⁷ According to commentators, there are 68 **ottālīcaikkali** in *kalittokai* (Nacc:155, cey.130; Pē:312, cey.442). But Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *kalittokai* accounts only for 58.

¹⁰⁸ Nacc:166, cey.143.

¹⁰⁹ Nacc:174-175, cey.148.

without a **curitakam**. The mode of composition (**yāppu**) and the content (**poruḷ**) may also be different from others. It has a minimum of ten and a maximum of twenty lines. The poem identified as a **koccaka oru pōku** in classical Tamil poetry, in fact, has taravu and tāḷicai in addition to taṇi-c-col and curitakam: *kalittokai 1* which is an invocation to the deity Śiva. One traditional commentator, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar, explains that the poem is construed as a **koccaka oru pōku**, rather than as an ottāḷicai-k-kali, because it is a song to a deity (**tēva-pāṇi**), and that it is not **vaṇṇakam** because it does not have **eṇ** and **cinṇam**.¹¹⁰

ampōtaraṅka oru pōku

The **ampōtaraṅka oru pōku** is supposed to have 60 lines. If the lines in each couplet are considered, the number is 120. The minimum number of lines is fifteen. The components of the **ampōtaraṅka oru pōku** are **eruttu**, **koccakam**, **arākam**, **cirreṇ**, and **aṭakkiyal vāram**. There is no **ampōtaraṅka oru pōku** attested in classical Tamil.

kali-veṇ-pāṭṭu

The **kali veṇ pāṭṭu** gets its name because it is a poem in a **veṇpā** which has “become” a **kalippā**.¹¹¹ It is composed of lines (**veḷḷaṭi**) with **iyarcīr** and **veṇcīr**. Two types of **kali veṇ pāṭṭu** have been identified: **kali veṇpā** and **veṇ kalippā**.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Nacc:6-7, commentary on *kalittokai 1*.

¹¹¹ Nacc:155, cey.130.

¹¹² The later convention specifies that **kali veṇpā** employs only **veṇ taḷai** whereas the **veṇ kalippā** employs the **kalittaḷai** and **veṇ cīr veṇ taḷai** (*Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai*:113-114, Rule 31). The earlier convention does not have this specification.

kali-venṇā

The first kind of kali veṇ pāṭṭu, the **kali venṇā**, can further be identified as having two different structure types. One type is not supposed to exceed twelve lines, but in classical Tamil poetry only two kali venṇā follow this rule: one has eleven lines (*kalittokai* 6) and the other has twelve lines (*kalittokai* 18), while all the others with this structure have more than twelve lines (e.g., *kalittokai* 12, 24, 37, 65, 111). This type of kali venṇā could convey the intended subject matter obliquely, not directly (e.g., *kalittokai* 18). Mostly veṇ taḷai is used here, although ācīriyattaḷai also occurs occasionally (e.g., *kalittokai* 24, 12). The lines (aṭi) here are aḷavaṭi (four cīr) and the last line is similar to the last line in a **venṇā**, having three metrical feet with nēr, nēru, nirai, or niraipu as the last **acai/cīr** (*kalittokai* 6). There are eight kali venṇā with this structure in classical Tamil: *kalittokai* 6, 12, 18, 24, 37, 51, 65, 111.

The second type of **kali venṇā** has several components like the taravu, iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu, pōkku, taṇi-c-col, and curitakam. In classical Tamil, the following 25 are the kali venṇā with this structure: *kalittokai* 42, 50, 64, 80-84, 86, 88, 89, 92, 96, 98, 109, 110, 115, 116, 138, 139, 140-143, 146. For the most part, this type of kali venṇā would have four feet per line and allow five or even six metrical feet occasionally (e.g., *kalittokai* 84). In this type, the **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu** occurs between **taravu** and **pōkku** (e.g., *kalittokai* 81). Then, a **curitakam** in the **ācīriyam** or **venṇā** meter would end the **kali venṇā** (e.g., *kalittokai* 146, 83). Rarely, the **curitakam** in the **venṇā** meter ends with a **cīr** which has more than one **acai** (*kalittokai* 80; cf. Nacc:197). The **curitakam** need not be preceded by a **taṇi-c-col** (e.g., *kalittokai* 116).

veṇ-kalippā

The second kind of kali veṇ pāṭṭu, known as the **veṇ kalippā**, exceeds twelve lines in which metrical bindings other than **veṇ taḷai** also occur. A line with five metrical feet (**aiñcīr aṭi**) is also permissible. The poem ends like a **veṇpā**. The intended subject matter (**poruḷ**) here is directly conveyed. There is only one veṇ kalippā in classical Tamil poetry (*kalittokai* 63).

koccaka-k-kalippā

The **koccaka-k-kalippā** gets its name by the variety of components it has.¹¹³ It may contain the same components as the **kali veṇpā**, but may not be similar to it in structure. The **koccakam** can be in **veṇpā** meter, which need not prevail in the poem, since just one component such as the **taravu** could be in **veṇpā** (e.g., *kalittokai* 7). Two **taravu** can occur in a sequence in **koccaka-k-kalippā**, and need not be followed by **tāḷicai** (e.g., *kalittokai* 19). The **taravu** can be followed by a **curitakam** with or without a **taṇi-c-col** in between (e.g., *kalittokai* 32). The **tāḷicai** here differ from the **tāḷicai** occurring in other types of **kalippā**, because they are either interrupted by a **corcīraṭi** or are not of equal length (e.g., *kalittokai* 36, 33, 47). Also there could be just one, two, three, or four **tāḷicai** in a poem (e.g., *kalittokai* 108, 149, 118, 106). The following 49 poems have been identified as **koccaka-k-kalippā** in classical Tamil poetry: *kalittokai* 7, 19, 21, 23, 26, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43, 47, 54-56, 61, 62, 68, 85, 90, 93-95, 97, 101-108, 112, 117-120, 122, 125, 129-131, 133, 144, 145, 147-149.

¹¹³ Nacc:155, cey.130.

uṛaḷ kali

The **uṛaḷ kali** gets its name from its content.¹¹⁴ It is like a dialogue, in that it has statements (**kūṛru**) and responses (**māṛṛam**). It does not contain the feature **pōkku** to wrap up what is said in the previous lines, but can have **curitakam**. The **curitakam** is in the **ācīriyam** meter. There are five **uṛaḷ kali** in classical Tamil poetry: *kalittokai* 60, 87, 91, 113, 114.

aḷavu (length)

The term **aḷavu** ‘measure’ in Tamil prosody refers to the size of a poem. The **ācīriyappāṭṭu** ‘song/poem in **ācīriyam** meter’ has a minimum of three and a maximum of 1,000 lines. The **neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu** ‘long song in **veṇpā** meter’ is supposed to have a maximum of twelve lines, while the **kuru veṇ pāṭṭu** ‘short song in **veṇpā** meter’ has a minimum of two lines. The **aṅkata-p-pāṭṭu** ‘satirical song/poem’ has a minimum of two and a maximum of twelve lines. The **kali veṇ pāṭṭu**, **kaikkīlai-c-ceyyuḷ**, and compositions that focus on **puṛa nilai**, **vāyurai**, and **ceviyurai** do not have any particular limit on the number of lines. The latter three contain words of wisdom and employ the **veṇpā** meter in the beginning and end in the **ācīriyam**. The **paripāṭal** has a minimum of 25 and a maximum of 400 lines.

Compositions (**ceyyuḷ**) in which there is no limit on the number of lines are treatises (**nūl**), expositions (**urai**), riddles (**pici**), axioms (**mutu moli**), and mnemonics containing secret messages (**maṛai moli kiḷakkum mantiram**); they do not play a role in classical Tamil poems.

¹¹⁴ Nacc:155, cey.130.

Processes of Tamil Prosody

Theoreticians of classical Tamil poetry have provided two terms, **yāppu** and **tūkkū**, which refer to certain mechanisms of poetry.

yāppu (process of composition)

The term **yāppu** literally means ‘tying.’ In the tradition of Tamil poetry, **yāppu** refers to the process of composition using letters (**eḷuttu**), basic metrical units (**acai**), metrical feet (**cīr**), and lines (**aṭi**). It is defined as “establishing the intended subject matter so that it is completed in the lines that are formed by items such as **eḷuttu**.”¹¹⁵ The process of composing the subject matter (**poruḷ**) has the following seven bases (**nilam**): the song or poem (**pāṭṭu**) which the classical Tamil poems exemplify, expositions (**urai**), treatises (**nūl**), improvisation or recitation (**vāymoli**), riddles (**pici**), satire (**aṅkatam**), and axioms (**mutu col**).

tūkkū (process of assessment/evaluation)

Traditional commentators explain that this term normally applies to various processes like weighing (**niṟuttal**), dividing (**aṟuttal**), and singing (**pāṭal**). In prosody, it refers to the process of measuring/evaluating/assessing a poem. Specifically, it is construed as the process of measuring the entity called **pā** (meter) by dividing it into various types of feet and lines.¹¹⁶ Commentators compare this process to that of weighing gold and silver in terms of the traditional measurements known as the **kaḷañcu**, **toṭi**, and **tulām**. Further, they say that in a similar manner, **tukku** divides the **pā**,

¹¹⁵ Nacc:77-78, cey.78.

¹¹⁶ Nacc:84, cey.87; Pē:241, cey.399.

which is spread over a limited number of lines, in terms of those feet and lines and reveals the difference in the sounds (*ōcai*) of various *pā*.¹¹⁷

It was explained earlier under “*cīr*” that *tūkku* is one of the three components of a rhythmic cycle of beats (*tālam*) and that it represents the duration of one such cycle. Therefore, we have to understand *tūkku* as the duration of a rhythmic cycle of beats and as a process of determining the meter.

The process construed as *tūkku* is supposed to take place with respect to the meters known as the *ācīriyam*, *vañci*, *veṇpā*, and *kali*.¹¹⁸ When such *tūkku* is performed and the duration of a certain cycle of rhythmic beats is established, a certain sound is supposed to result.

The sound resulting from a cycle of rhythmic beats in a poem is known by the term *ōcai* ‘sound’ which may be equated to rhythm. Four such *ōcai* have been recognized in the tradition as proper to classical Tamil poetry: *akaval*, *ceppal*, *tullal*, and *tūṅkal*. It is said that a poem (*pāṭṭu*) is not articulated without these sounds.¹¹⁹

akaval *ōcai* (‘calling sound’)

The sound that is achieved through the *ācīriyam* meter is *akaval* ‘calling’ (< *akavu* ‘to call out’). It resides in an uninterrupted flow of narration. Traditional commentators explain it as follows: “There is also a mode in which a person says what he wants in whatever manner he wants. It is not like a statement and a reply where a person asks something and the other person replies. Those who practice it refer to it also as *alaittal* ‘addressing, calling out.’ The overall sound pervading their words

¹¹⁷ Nacc:81, cey.81; Pē:238, cey.393.

¹¹⁸ Nacc:84, cey.87.

¹¹⁹ Nacc:83, cey.86.

is called **akaval**. It is heard in the words of craftsmen/carpenters (**taccu vinai mākkal**), those who sing about the battlefield (**kaḷam pāṭum vinaiñar**), fortune tellers (**kaṭṭum kaḷaṅkum iṭṭu uraippār**), those who talk to themselves in a contradicting manner (monologues, **tammil uraḷntu uraippār**), and those who raise an uproar (**pūcal icaippār**).¹²⁰

ceppal ōcai ('replying sound')

The sound perceived in the **veṇpā** meter is **ceppal** 'replying, proclaiming' (< **ceppu** 'to reply, proclaim, state'). It is the stately sound that arises when someone replies clearly to another in a natural/spontaneous manner without hiding anything.¹²¹ The **ceppal ōcai** pervades the entire composition. A traditional commentator says that it has the sound of a sentence (**vākkiyam**) unlike the **akaval** which is musical/melodious.¹²²

tuḷḷal ōcai ('jumpy sound')

The sound heard in the **kali** meter is **tuḷḷal** 'jumping' < **tuḷḷu** 'to jump (like a fish).' It is described as an **ōcai** which does not have an uninterrupted pace but which flows high now and then. It is compared to the jumping of a calf.¹²³ Here, the stately sound created by a **veṇṇīr** is jerked by the following **veṇṇīr** which does not begin with a **nēr**, and this produces a jumpy sound (e.g., *kali.11:1-2, 4-5*).

¹²⁰ Nacc:82, cey.81; Pē:238, cey.393.

¹²¹ "maṇaittuk kūṛātu ceppik kuṛutal"; Nacc:194, cey.153.

¹²² Ḵam:457, cey.387.

¹²³ Ḵam:457, cey.388.

tūṅkal ōcai ('sedate/suspending sound')

The sound created by the **vañci** meter is **tūṅkal** 'suspending' (< **tūṅku** 'to suspend'). Each metrical foot producing this meter is supposed to hold this **ōcai**. The **ōcai** does not stretch across a foot, but is confined to it.

Traditional commentators note that **akaval** and **ceppal** are the only two sounds that were put into use outside of poetry, and that **tuḷḷal** and **tūṅkal** appear only in poetry.¹²⁴ Note that the **akaval** and **ceppal** sounds pervade the entire composition while the **tuḷḷal** and **tūṅkal** are controlled and contained by individual metrical feet.

Aesthetic Components

Stringing (**toṭai**), rhythmic effect (**vaṇṇam**), and fastening (**māṭṭu**) are the structural components which beautify Tamil poems.

toṭai (stringing)

The term **toṭai** literally means 'stringing' < **toṭu** 'to string (like flowers)'. In Tamil poetic tradition, it refers to the way in which successive feet or lines are strung in a poem. These feet and lines are strung by similar syllables and words or contrasting words. The occurrence of similar syllables and words in successive feet or lines corresponds to "alliteration," whereas the contrasting words correspond to "antonyms." According to one commentator, **toṭai** must beautify poetry like a string of flowers.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Nacc:82-83, cey.81-84; Pē:238-239, cey.393-396.

¹²⁵ Pē:252, cey.406.

Four basic types of **toṭai** are recognized: **mōṇai**, **etukai**, **iyaipu**, and **muraṇ**. Among these, the first three are phonological, based on the shape of the words, and the last one is semantic, based on the meaning of the words that may or may not rhyme. A secondary type of phonological alliteration is also identified: **aḷapeṭai-t-toṭai**. Two specific modes of employing **toṭai** are **niral nirai** and **iraṭṭai**. In the absence of these recognized types of **toṭai**, there would exist what is known as **centoṭai** ‘perfect stringing’, obviously an euphemism.

Positional Categorization of **toṭai**

The feature **toṭai** is basically positional in the sense that it is considered to bring up a connection between same part(s) of different metrical feet (**cīr**) within the same line (**aṭi**) or across lines. The parts of a foot for this purpose can be referred to as the beginning, second/middle, and end. Then the positional **toṭai** can be sub-categorized according to the phonological shape or meaning of the items which are involved in this process.

In general, when there is alliteration between the beginning parts of different feet, it acquires the generic reference **mōṇai-t-toṭai** or simply **mōṇai** (< **mūn** ‘to be in the front/beginning’). Similar alliteration between subsequent parts of different feet is called **etukai-t-toṭai** or simply **etukai** (?< **etirkai** ‘facing’ < **etir** ‘to face, to be in front’). The alliteration at the end parts of different feet receives the name **iyaipu-t-toṭai** or simply **iyaipu** (< **iyai** ‘to agree’).

Alliteration between different feet across lines has different names. If the alliteration is in the first feet in subsequent lines, then it is qualified to be an **aṭi**-alliteration, indicating that it is spread across lines. Thus, for example, **aṭi mōṇai** ‘line **mōṇai**’ is present if the first letter (**eḷuttu**) or **acai** or the whole first foot rhymes respectively with the first letter, **acai**, or the whole first foot of the next line. If such alliteration skips a line, then

it is called an **iṭai-iṭṭa**-alliteration, meaning that there is a gap “placed between” the rhyming lines.

Alliteration between different feet within a line also has different names. The one existing between the first and second feet within a line is an **iṇai** ‘pair’ alliteration. So, there is **iṇai mōṇai**, **iṇai etukai**, **iṇai iyaipu**, and **iṇai muraṇ**. Alliteration between the first and third feet is a **polippu** alliteration. An **orūu** (< oru(vu) ‘to be distant’) alliteration is that which exists between the first and fourth feet. The **kūlai** (‘immature, not fully grown’) alliteration is the one between the first, second, and third feet. If the first, second, and fourth feet carry the alliteration, then the latter is called a **kīlkkatuvāy** (< kīl + kku + atu + vāy) alliteration. A **mēṛkatuvāy** (< mēl + kku + atu + vāy) alliteration is that which occurs between the first, third, and fourth feet. If all four feet have the alliteration, then it is a **murru** ‘complete’ alliteration.

Sub-categorization of **toṭai**

The positional categorization discussed above applies to all the four major types of **toṭai**, namely **mōṇai**, **etukai**, **muraṇ**, and **iyaipu**. The sub-categorization based on the nature of letters such as vowels and consonants applies only to **mōṇai** and **etukai**, while such categorization based on the meaning of words applies only to **muraṇ**.

Sub-categorization of **toṭai** Based on the Nature of Letters

If the stringing/alliteration is due only to the consonants, not the vowels, then it is a **varukka** alliteration, meaning there is alliteration of the same consonant attached to different vowels. If the alliteration exists only in the vowels that are added to no/different consonants in the initial position, then it is called a **vali** alliteration “succeeding rhyme.” Alliteration between long vowels is a **neṭil** alliteration and that between short vowels

is a **uyir** alliteration. The alliteration due to the three classes of consonants is called an **ina** 'class' alliteration. Since there are the hard class (**val inam**), the soft class (**mel inam**), and the middle class (**iṭai inam**), there exist the **val-inā**-alliteration, **mel-inā**-alliteration, and **iṭai-inā**-alliteration. If the **varukka** alliteration spreads across different feet within a line, then there exists what is called a **cīr vakai varukka** alliteration such as **cīr vakai varukka mōṇai** or **cīr vakai varukka etukai**.¹²⁶

A subsequent type of these sub-categorical alliterations is an **anu** alliteration which treats the vowels or consonants which have the same or closest points of articulation as a class. For this purpose, **a**, **ā**, **ai**, and **au** form a class, as do **i**, **ī**, **e**, and **ē**; **u**, **ū**, **o**, and **ō**; **c** and **t**; **ñ** and **n**; and **m** and **v**.

As pointed out earlier, the sub-categorical alliterations apply to the two major positional alliterations, namely **mōṇai** and **etukai**. There are some other similar alliterations special to the **etukai** and all of them concern the first feet in subsequent lines. If the alliteration skips the first parts of the feet and prevails in later parts, then it is qualified as a **talai āku** alliteration, but is special to **etukai**. So, there is **talai āku etukai**, but no **talai āku mōṇai**. Similarly, the alliteration called **ācu iṭai iṭṭa etukai** is special to **etukai**. Here, certain consonants, **y** (ய), **r** (ர), and **l** (ல) when occurring as the second **eluttu** in only one of the several feet participating in an **etukai** process, are ignored and the following **eluttu** would be treated as the second **eluttu** in the alliteration. The third alliteration special to **etukai** is **mūṇrām eluttu onru etukai** which, as its name suggests, is the alliteration between the third letters in different feet which are at the beginning of subsequent lines.

Minor variations in the above exist reflecting different conventions. According to the earlier convention, the **varukka** alliteration is common to

¹²⁶ Cf. Nacc:92, cey.94, where he gives examples of சீர் வகை மெல்லின எதுகை etc.

mōnai and **etukai**. The **neṭil** and **aṇu** alliterations apply only to **mōnai**. Alliterations focusing on short vowels (**uyir** alliteration) and the three classes (**val inam**, **mel inam**, and **iṭai inam**) of consonants, **ācu iṭai iṭṭa etukai**, and the **mūṇrām eḷuttu onru etukai** apply only to **etukai**. Thus, by this convention, there are ten sub-alliterations of which two are specific to **mōnai** and six to **etukai**; two are common. Those ten alliterations are: **varukka mōnai**, **varukka etukai**, **neṭil mōnai**, **aṇu mōnai**, **uyir etukai**, **val inā etukai**, **mel inā etukai**, **iṭai inā etukai**, **ācu iṭai iṭṭa etukai**, and **mūṇrām eḷuttu onru etukai**.

The later convention makes every sub-category of alliteration apply to every major type of alliteration so the entire scheme of **toṭai** is more symmetrical. It also adds a sub-category which gives a special qualifier **iraṇṭaṭi** ‘two lines’ to the alliteration, meaning that the alliteration prevails in two lines. Thus, for example, there would be an **iraṇṭaṭi mōnai** if only two consecutive lines have a **mōnai** alliteration and the **mōnai** changes for the next two consecutive lines. Examples of the different alliterations/stringing found in classical Tamil poems are as follows. Items participating in this process are given in bold type.

Examples:

In *aiṅk.16:3-4*, the first **eḷuttu** in subsequent lines are identical, yielding **aṭi mōnai**:

பூக்களு லூரனை யுள்ளிப்
பூப்போ லுண்கண் பொன்போர்த் தனவே

In *куру.4:3-4*, the first **acai** in subsequent lines are identical, yielding **aṭi mōnai**:

அமை தற் கமைந்தநங் காதலர்
அமை வில ராகுத னோமென் னெஞ்சே

In *kuṟu.359:5-6*, the first **cīr** in subsequent lines are identical, yielding **aṭi mōṇai**:

புதல்வன் தழீஇயினன் விறலவன்
புதல்வன் தாயவன் புறங்கவைஇ யினளே

In *kuṟu.263:7-8*, the second **eḷuttu** are identical, yielding **aṭi etukai**. This is also known by the name **iṭai āku etukai**:

மழை வினே யாடு நாடனைப்
பிழையே மாகிய நாமிதற் படவே

In *puṛa.187:3-4*, the **feet** excluding the first **eḷuttu** are identical, yielding **talai āku etukai**:

எவ்வழி நல்லவ ராடவர்
அவ்வழி நல்லை வாழிய நிலனே

In *aka.15:1-2*, the consonant **ய்** intervenes between the first and second **eḷuttu** in line 2, yielding **ācu iṭai iṭṭa etukai**:

எம்வெங் காமம் இயைவ தாயின்
மெய்ம்மலி பெரும்பூட் செம்மற் கோசர்

In *puṛa.3:1-2*, the third **eḷuttu** are identical, yielding **mūṇrām eḷuttu onru etukai**:

உவவுமதி யுருவி னோங்கல் வெண்குடை
நில வுக்கடல் வரைப்பின் மண்ணக நிழற்ற

In *puṛa.41:5-6*, the last **eḷuttu** are identical, yielding **aṭi iyaipu**:

பெருமரத் திலையி னெடுங்கோடு வற்றல் பற்றவும்
வெங்கதிர்க் கனலி தூற்றவும் பிறவும்

In *pura.187:1-2*, the last **cīr** are identical, yielding **aṭi iyaipu**:

நாடா கொன்றே காடா கொன்றே
அவலா கொன்றே மிசையா கொன்றே

In *куру.23:1, 3* the first **cīr** are identical, yielding **aṭi iṭai iṭṭa mōnai**:

அகவன் மகளே அகவன் மகளே
மனவுக்கோப் பன்ன நன்னெடுங் கூந்தல்
அகவன் மகளே பாடுக பாட்டே

In *peru.165, 167* the second **eluttu** are identical, yielding **aṭi iṭai iṭṭa etukai**:

ளெருமை நல்லான் கருநாகு பெறுஉ
மடிவாய்க் கோவலர் குடிவயிற் சேப்பி
னிருங்கினை ளெண்டின் சிறுபார்ப் பன்ன

In *pari.13:16, 18* the last **cīr** are identical, yielding **aṭi iṭai iṭṭa iyaipu**:

அவையவை கொள்ளுங் கருவியு நீயே
முந்தியாங் கூறிய வைந்த னுள்ளும்
ஒன்றறிற் போற்றிய விசம்பு நீயே

In *narr.167:6*, the first **eluttu** in the first and second **cīr** are identical, yielding **iṇai mōnai**:

பயன்தெரி பனுவல் பைதீர் பாண

In *narr.344:8*, the first **acai** in the first and second **cīr** are identical, yielding **iṇai mōnai**:

செல் வன் செல் லுங்கொல் தானே உயர்வரைப்

In *pari.13:5*, the second **eluttu** in the first and second **cīr** are identical, yielding **iṇai etukai**:

விண்ணளி கொண்ட வியன்மதி யணிகொள

In *pari.6:31*, the last **eluttu** in the first and second **cīr** from the back yield **īnai iyaipu**:

அணியணி யாகிய தாரர் கருவியர்

In *pari.6:22*, the first and second **cīr** from the back yield **īnai iyaipu**:

வரைச்சிறை யுடைத்ததை வையை வையை த்

In *narr.24:7*, the first **eluttu** in the first and third **cīr** are identical, yielding **polippu mōnai**:

வெயில்வீற் றிருந்த வெம்பலை அருஞ்சரம்

In *narr.24:7*, the first **acai** in the first and third **cīr** are identical, yielding **polippu mōnai**:

நன் றெனப் புரிந்தோய் நன் றுசெய்தனையே

In *kuru.23:1*, the first and third **cīr** are identical, yielding **polippu mōnai**:

அகவ ன் மகளே அகவன் மகளே

In *narr.25:4*, the second **eluttu** in the first and third **cīr** are identical, yielding **polippu etukai**:

பொன்னுரை கல்லின் நன்னிறம் பெறுஉம்

In *narr.166:2*, the last **eluttu** in the first and third **cīr** from the back are identical, yielding **polippu iyaipu**:

நன்னர் மேனியும் நாறிருங் கதுப்பும்

In *pura.187:1*, the first and third **cīr** from the back are identical, yielding **polippu iyaipu**:

நாடா கொன்றே காடா கொன்றே

In *narr.24:6*, the first **eluttu** in the first and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **orūu mōṇai**:

சேறும் நாமெனச் சொல்லச் சேயிறை

In *pari.6:97*, the first **acai** in the first and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **orūu mōṇai**:

துனி நீங்கி யாட றெடங்கு துனி நனி

In *narr.251:8*, the second **eluttu** in the first and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **orūu etukai**:

பலி பெறு கடவுட் பேணிக் கலி சிறந்து

In *narr.344:5*, the last **eluttu** in the first and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **orūu iyaipu**:

நம்நிலை இடைதெரிந்து உணரான் தன்மலை

In *aka.18:9*, the last **acai** in the first and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **orūu iyaipu**:

ஒருநாள் விழுமம் உறினும் வழிநாள்

In *kali.101:1*, the first **eluttu** in the first three **cīr** are identical, yielding **kūlai mōṇai**:

தளிபெறு தண்புலத்துத் தலைப்பெயற் கரும்பீன்று

In *pari.12:101*, the first three **cīr** are identical, yielding **kūlai mōṇai**:

நன்பல நன்பல நன்பல கவைய

In *malai:567*, the second **eluttu** in the first three **cīr** are identical, yielding **kūlai etukai**:

செல் வேந் தில் லவெந் தொல் பதிப் பெயர்ந்தென

In *pari.6:46*, the last **eḷuttu** in the first three **cīr** from the back yield **kūlai iyaipu**:

மாறுமென் மலரும் தாரும் கிழங்கும்

In *pari.10:98*, the first three **cīr** from the back are identical, yielding **kūlai iyaipu**:

அரத்தின்வாய் போன்ம் போன்ம் போன்ம்

In *kali.78:2*, the first **eḷuttu** in the first, second, and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **kīlkkatuvāy mōṇai**:

இன்மலர் இமிற்புதந் துண்புணர் இருந்தும்பி

In *cīru.64*, the second **eḷuttu** in the first, second, and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **kīlkkatuvāy etukai**:

மண்மாறு கொண்ட மாலை வெண்குடை

In *kuṛi.130*, the last **eḷuttu** in the first, second, and fourth **cīr** from the back are identical, yielding **kīlkkatuvāy iyaipu**:

உரவுச்சினம் செருக்கித் துன்னுதொறும் வெகுளும்

In *kali.38:16*, the first **eḷuttu** in the first, third, and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **mēṛkatuvāy mōṇai**:

அருள்வல்லான் ஆக்கம்போல் அணிபெறும் அவ்வணி

In *kuṛi.77*, the second **eḷuttu** in the first, third, and fourth **cīr** are identical, yielding **mēṛkatuvāy etukai**:

தில்லை பாலை கல்லிவர் முல்லை

In *pari.4:67*, the last **eḷuttu** in the first, third, and fourth **cīr** from the back yield **mēṛkatuvāy iyaipu**:

ஆலமும் கடம்பும் நல்யாற்று நடுவும்

In *aka.44:11*, the first **eḷuttu** in all the four **cīr** are identical yielding **murru mōṇai**:

பருந்துபடப் பண்ணிப் பழையன் பட்டெனக்

In *pari.15:10*, the second **eḷuttu** in all the four **cīr** are identical yielding **murru etukai**:

குல வரை சிலவே குல வரை சில வினும்

In *pari.3:78*, the last **eḷuttu** in all the four **cīr** are identical yielding **murru iyaipu**:

இரண்டென முன்றென நான்கென வைந்தென

In *pari.3:83*, the last **acai** in all the four **cīr** are identical yielding **murru iyaipu**:

இடவல குடவல கோவல காவல

In *aka.8:10-11*, only the initial consonants in subsequent lines are identical, yielding **varukka mōṇai**:

படுகடுங் களிற்றின் வருத்தஞ் சொலிய

பிடிபடி முருக்கிய பெருமரப் பூசல்

In *kuru.33:3-4*, the first vowels in subsequent lines are identical, yielding **vaḷi mōṇai**:

இரந்தா ணிரம்பா மேனியொடு *irantū ṇirampā mēṇiyotu*

விருந்தி னாரும் பெருஞ்செம் மலனே *viruntī nūrum peruñcem malanē*

In *neṭu:39-40*, the vowels that follow the initial consonants in subsequent lines are identical, yielding **vaḷi mōṇai**:

வெள்ளி வள்ளி விளங்கிறைப் பணைத்தோள் vellī vaḷḷi viḷaṅkīraip paṇaittōḷ
செவ்வி யரும்பின் பைங்காற் பித்திகத்து cevvi yarumpiṇ painkāṛ pittikattu

In *pati.61:11-12*, the initial vowels form a class, yielding **anu mōṇai**:

இரக்கு வாரே னெஞ்சிக் கூறேன் irakku vārē neñcic kūṛēṇ
ஈத்த திரங்கா னீத்தொறு மகிழான் ītta tiraṅkā ṇīttoru makilāṇ

In *pati.61:17-18*, the initial consonants form a class, yielding **anu mōṇai**:

முழவிற் போக்கிய வெண்கை muḷaviṛ pōkkiya veṇkai
விழவி னன்னநின் கலிமகிழானே viḷavi ṇannaniṇ kalimaki ḷāṇē

In *matu:1-2*, there is **vaḷi mōṇai** as well as **anu mōṇai**:

ஓங்குதிறை வியன்பரப்பி ōṅkutirai viyaṇparappi
ஞலிமுநநீர் வரம்பாக ṇolimunnīr varampāka

In *aka.41:9-10*, there is **neṭil mōṇai**:

காடணி கொண்ட காண்டகு பொழுதின் kāṭaṇi koṇṭa kāṇṭaku poḷutiṇ
நாம்பிரி புலம்பின் நலஞ்செலச் சாஅய் nāmpirī pulampiṇ nalañcelac cāay

In *aka.42:5-6*, there is **neṭil mōṇai**:

நாடுவறங் கூர நாஞ்சில் துஞ்சக் nāṭuvaraṇ kūra nāñcil tuñcak
கோடை நீடிய பைதறு காலக் kōṭai nīṭiya paitaṛu kālaik

In *kuṟu.384:1-2*, the vowel in the second **eluttu** are identical, yielding **uyir etukai**:

உறுந்துடைக் கழுந்திற் கரும்புடைப் பணைத்தோள் uḷuntuṭaik kaḷuntir karumpuṭaip
paṇaittōḷ

நெடும்பல் கூந்தற் குறுந்தொடி மகளிர் neṭumpal kūntaṛ kuṛuntoṭi makaḷir

In *kurū.33:3-4*, the second *eḷuttu* contain the same consonant but different vowels, yielding **varukka etukai**:

இரந்தா ணிரம்பா மேனியொடு *irantū ṇirampā mēṇiyotu*
 விருந்தி னாரும் பெருஞ்செம் மலனே *viruntī ṇūrum peruñcem malanē*

In *kurū.121:3-4*, the second *eḷuttu* belong to the hard class (**val inam**), yielding **vallina etukai**:

ஆற்றப் பாயாத் தப்ப லேற்ற
 கோட்டொடு போகி யாங்கு நாடன்

In *kurū.292:4-5*, the second *eḷuttu* belong to the soft class (**mel inam**), yielding **mellina etukai**:

பொன்செய் பாவை கொடுப்பவுங் கொள்ளான்
 பெண்கொலை புரிந்த நன்னன் போல

In *aka.26:3-4*, the second *eḷuttu* belong to the middle class (**iṭai inam**), yielding **iṭaiyina etukai**:

பொய்தல் மகளிர் விழுவணிக் கூட்டும்
 அவ்வயின் நண்ணிய வளங்கே ழுரனைப்

In *pari.19:61-62*, there is **aḷapeṭai-t-toṭai**:

ஏள யோஒ வெனவிளி யேற்பிக்க
 ஏள யோஒவென் றேலா வவ்விளி

In *aka.18:3-5*, there is **aḷapeṭai-t-toṭai**:

கராஅந் துஞ்சங் கல்லுயர் மறிசுழி
 மராஅ யானை மதந்தப ஒற்றி
 உராஅ ஈர்க்கும் உட்குவரு நீத்தங்

An example of **centotai** is *aka.73:13-14*.

மடிபதம் பார்க்கும் வயமான் துப்பின்
ஏனலஞ் சிறுதினைச் சேனோன் கையதைப்

Sub-categorization of “Stringing” Based on Meaning (**muraṇ totai**)

The mode of contrasting is called **muraṇ** ‘to oppose, contrast.’ The contrast or opposition basically exists between words referring to contrasting ideas. Since words refer to different qualities or things in a language, contrast/opposition is also accomplished in more than one way. The variations in the usage of such words result in different types of **muraṇ** in this tradition. The contrasting words need not bear a phonological similarity and may be placed in the same line or in different lines.

Words which basically refer to contrasting qualities produce a contrast which is identified as a contrast by words (**col muraṇ**). The contrasting qualities may modify the same type of things or refer to totally different things. Words which stand for or refer to things which happen to have contrasting qualities are said to bring about a contrast by referents (**poruḷ muraṇ**). Words which stand for contrasting qualities and modify different things trigger a contrast by word (**col**) and referent (**poruḷ**). Examples are provided next with the contrasting items given in bold type.

Contrast by words (**col muraṇ**)

குடபுல ங் காவலர் மருமா னென்னார் **western land**
வடபுல விமயத்து வாங்குவிற் பொறித்த **northern land** (*ciru:47-48*)

குறியா இன்பம் எளிதின் நின்மலைப் **unintended pleasure**
பல்வேறு விலங்கும் எய்து நாட
குறித்த இன்பம் நினக்கெவன் அரிய **intended pleasure** (*aka.2:8, 10*)

சேய்த்தும் அன்று சிறிதுநணி யதுவே **distance; closeness** (*ciru.201*)
 Here, the same place is talked about as not being **faraway** but being **close**.

வாழை யோங்கிய தாழ்கண் அசம்பில் **standing tall; low land** (*aka.8:9*)
 Here, the banana tree (வாழை) is **standing tall**, while the ditch (அசம்பு) is **low**.

முதுவோர் க்கு முகிழ்த்த கையினை யெனவும் **elders**
 இளையோர் க்கு மலர்ந்த மார்பினை யெனவும் **youngsters** (*ciru.231-232*)

Contrast by referents (**poruḷ muran**)

நீரோ ரன்ன சாயல் **water**
 தீயோ ரன்னவென் னுரனவித்தன்றே **fire** (*kur.95:4-5*)

அற்றை த் திங்க எவ்வெண் ணிலவின் **that day**
 எந்தையு முடையேமெங் குன்றும் பிறர்கொளார்
 இற்றை த் திங்க எவ்வெண் ணிலவின் **this day** (*pura.112:1, 3*)

இன்ன தம்மவிவ் வுலகம் **not pleasant, cruel**
 இனிய காண்கித வியல்புணர்ந்தோரே **pleasant, sweet** (*pura.194:6-7*)

Contrast by word (**col**) and referent (**poruḷ**)

சிறுவீ முல்லைக்குப் பெருந்தேர் நல்கிய **small flowers; big chariot**
 புலவுக்கய லெடுத்த பொன்வாய் மணிச்சிரல் **golden beak; blue bird**
 (*ciru.89, 181*)

இரு பேர் யாற்ற ஒரு பெருங் கூடல் two big rivers; one big confluence
(*pura.273:5*)

Certain Modes of Employing *toṭai*

The *irattai* and *niral-nirai* are two specific modes of employing the various types of *toṭai* discussed above. Among them, the *irattai* is simpler. It is supposed to allow the same word to recur four times so as to compose the four feet (*cīr*) in a line, but there is no such line in classical Tamil poems. The maximum number of times the same word occurs in these poems is three: நன்பல நன்பல நன்பல வையை (*pari.12:101*); அரந்தின்வாய் போன்ம் போன்ம் போன்ம் (*pari.10:98*).¹²⁷

The *niral-nirai* mode refers to employing a given *toṭai* in a particular order. One of the ways it is done is first to string a group of items (e.g., A, B) in a row and then another group of items in a row (e.g., C, D), where each item in the first group is semantically connected to an item in the second group. The way these items are connected depends upon the order in which they are presented within their respective group. Thus, A is connected to C, whereas B is connected to D. The simplest example is இரதி காமன் இவள் இவன் ‘Rati, Kāmaṇ, she, he’ (*pari.19:48*). This line means ‘She is Rati. He is Kāmaṇ.’ Item A is ‘Rati’; B is ‘Kāmaṇ’; C is ‘she’; D is ‘he.’ There can be a maximum of four items in each of these groups, but the number of items in the second group is either equal to or half of the number of items in the first group. An example is *pari.13:44-45*.

வலம்புரி வாய்மொழி அதிர்வுவான்முழுக்குச் செல்
‘Valampuri conch, the Vedas, trembling roar of the sky, thunder’

¹²⁷ Commentators give the following examples: ஒக்குமே ஒக்குமே ஒக்குமே ஒக்கும்;
பாடுகோ பாடுகோ பாடுகோ பாடுகோ (cf. *Tolkāppiyam*, *poruḷatikāram*, Pē:245, cey.403).

அவை நான்கும் உறழும் அருள் செறல் வயின் மொழி

‘resembling those four (are) your words of compassion and destruction’

Here, the four items presented first are the sound of the **valampuri** conch (வலம்புரி), the chanting of the Vedas (வாய்மொழி), the roaring of the sky (அதிர்புவான்முழுக்கு), and thunder (செல்). And they are perceived as resembling, respectively, Vishnu’s compassionate gracious words (அருள் வயின் மொழி) and harsh words of destruction (செறல் வயின் மொழி). Notice that the first group contains four items whereas the second has only two.

Another way of using the **niral-nirai** mode is to present a given **totai** in what can be called a “parallel construction.” As an example, consider *ciru:164-167*.

பைந்தனை அவரை பவழம் கோப்பவும்

‘as the **avarai** with fresh buds strings (its buds) like coral’

கருநனைக் காயாக் கணமயில் அவிழவும்

‘as the **kāyā** with black/dark buds unfold like a flock of peacocks’

கொழுங்கொடி முசண்டை கொட்டம் கொள்ளவும்

‘as the fat **mucuṇṭai** vine puts out pit-like flowers’

செழுங்குலைக் காந்தள் கைவிரல் பூப்பவும்

‘as the **kāntaḷ**, with rich bunches, blooms like fingers’

Here, the first line contains an idea which recurs in a similar structural fashion in the succeeding few lines. This kind of structure is here called a “parallel construction.” The recurring idea is the comparison between a

flowering plant and something else. As for the type of **toṭai** in this **niral-nirai** mode, note that the last syllable in each line triggers the **iyaipu**-alliteration.

vaṇṇam (rhythmic variation)

The term **vaṇṇam** ‘beauty, color’ refers to the variation in rhythm (**canta vērupāṭu**). The tradition has identified twenty such variations. A commentator notes that these are components (**uruppu**) of a composition (**ceyyuḷ**). Therefore, it is not necessary for the entire composition to produce a given **vaṇṇam**. By the same token, it is possible to have more than one **vaṇṇam** in a given composition.¹²⁸

pāa vaṇṇam

The first one, **pāa vaṇṇam**, is the **vaṇṇam** proper to a grammatical verse (**nūrpā**). It is obtained when a word (**col**) makes up a foot (**cir**) and is used extensively in a treatise (**nūl**). Here, the metrical feet in a line (**aṭi**) are involved in a reckoning, as if in an exposition.¹²⁹ It is found occasionally in poetry. Examples are *aka.36:15* and *pati.14:1* where the items are involved in a reckoning: சேரல் செம்பியன் சினங்கெழு திதியன் ‘(The chieftains known as the) Cēral, Cempiyan, and the furious Titiyan’; நிலநீர் வளிவிசும் பென்ற நான்கின் ‘like the four, namely the earth, the water, the wind, and the sky.’

¹²⁸ Pē:419, cey.527.

¹²⁹ Iḷam:540, cey.515; Pē:418, cey.526.

tāa vaṇṇam

The vaṇṇam known as the **tāa vaṇṇam** is obtained when there is **etukai** alliteration in alternate metrical feet in the same line.¹³⁰ Another convention is to consider the **etukai** in the first metrical foot of alternate lines as producing the **tāa vaṇṇam**.¹³¹ These alliterations are otherwise known as **polippu etukai**, **orūu etukai**, and **aṭi iṭai iṭṭa etukai**. Examples were treated above.

vallicai vaṇṇam, mellicai vaṇṇam, and iyaipu vaṇṇam

The **vallicai vaṇṇam** employs numerous hard consonants (**val eluttu**), while **mellicai vaṇṇam** and **iyaipu vaṇṇam** are produced respectively by soft consonants (**mel eluttu**) and middle consonants (**iṭai eluttu**). Examples:

In *paṭṭ:218*, **vallicai vaṇṇam** is employed:

முட்டாச் சிறப்பி ன் பட்டினம் பெறினும்

Another example is *tiru:73*. முட்டாட் டாமரைத் துஞ்சி

In *narr.166:1-2*, **mellicai vaṇṇam** occurs:

பொன்னும் மணியும் போலும் யாழநின்

நன்னர் மேனியும் நாறிருங் கதுப்பும்

In *aka.36:3*, **iyaipu vaṇṇam** appears:

ஆம்பல் மெல்ல டை கிழியக் குவளைக்

¹³⁰ Pē:419, cey.527.

¹³¹ Ḥam:540, cey.516.

aḷapeṭai vaṇṇam, neṭuñcīr vaṇṇam, cittira vaṇṇam, nalipu vaṇṇam, and mirai-k-kavi

The **aḷapeṭai vaṇṇam** is obtained by using many elongated vowels (**uyir aḷapeṭai**) or elongated consonants (**orru aḷapeṭai**). The **neṭuñcīr vaṇṇam** is produced by long vowels (**neṭṭeluttu**), while **kuṟuñcīr vaṇṇam** is generated by the short vowels (**kuṟṟeluttu**). If there is an equal mixture of long and short vowels by alternation, then there is **cittira vaṇṇam**. The **nalipu vaṇṇam** is produced by the **āytam** (ஹ).

One commentator notes that it would be “unpleasant” (**innātu**) to use just one class or one type of letters (**eḷuttu**) in the whole composition which would then be called “an excessive poem” (**mirai-k-kavi**).¹³² Examples:

In *aka.99:8*, **aḷapeṭai vaṇṇam** is created by elongated vowels:

மராஅ மலரொடு விராஅய்ப் பராஅம்

In *malai:352*, **aḷapeṭai vaṇṇam** is created by elongated consonants:

கண்ண் தண்ண் னெனக் கண்டும் கேட்டும்

In *pura.273:1*, **neṭuñcīr vaṇṇam** is created by long letters:

மாவா ராதே மாவா ராதே māṁvā rātē māṁvā rātē

In *aka.98:4*, **kuṟuñcīr vaṇṇam** is created by short letters:

முனிதக நிறுத்த நல்கல் எவ்வம் muṇitaka niṟutta nalkal evvam

¹³² Pē:420, cey.529. It makes one wonder whether one of the most appreciated verses (“pañciyoḷir viñcukulir pallavama nuṅka ...”) in Kampan’s Irāmāvatāram, would have been disapproved as a **mirai-k-kavi** by earlier poets because of employing many nasals.

In *aka.61:1, 14*, **neṭuñcīr vaṇṇam** is generated by a mix of long and short letters:

நோற்றோர் மன்ற தாமே கூற்றம் nōṭṭōr maṇṇa tāmē kūṭṭam
பழகுவ ராதலோ அரிதே முனாஅது paḷakuva rātalō aritē muṇāatu

Classical Tamil poems do not have examples of **nalipu vaṇṇam**. An example is given from a later text, *tirukkuraḷ:178*

அஃ காமை செல்வத்துக் கியாதெனின் வெஃ காமை
aḥāmai celvattuk kiyātenin veḥāmai

akappāṭṭu vaṇṇam and **purappāṭṭu vaṇṇam**

The **akappāṭṭu vaṇṇam** exists when the last line in a composition gives the impression of not having ended the subject matter, but in fact, has. The opposite happens to produce the **purappāṭṭu vaṇṇam**: when a line gives the impression of having ended the subject matter, but in fact has not. Note that with a few exceptions, the last line in a composition in this period normally ends with the vowel ē. In *aiṅkuruṇūru* the last line in some verses (21-30; 211-220) ends with the letter ய், generating the **akappāṭṭu vaṇṇam**. An example is *aiṅk.219:4*: ஒண்ணுதல் பசப்ப தெவன்கொ லன்னா ய். Similarly, in *aka.46:16*, the last line ends with ௌ: சென்றி பெருமநின் தகைக்குநர் யாரோ. In *kuruntokai* 23, the third line ends like the last, but does not end the poem. It produces the **purappāṭṭu vaṇṇam**:

அகவன் மகளே அகவன் மகளே
மனவுக் கோப்பன்ன நன்னெடுங் கூந்தல்
அகவன் மகளே பாடுக பாட்டே
இன்னும் பாடுக பாட்டே அவர்
நன்னெடுங் குன்றம் பாடிய பாட்டே

oluku vaṇṇam, orūu vaṇṇam, and eṇṇu vaṇṇam

The **oluku vaṇṇam** is obtained when the lines in a composition produce an uninterrupted sound (*ōcai*) and present the subject matter in the order in which they are composed. When the subject matter is not spread across the lines but is compactly presented in each line, the **vaṇṇam** receives the name **orūu vaṇṇam**. If there is reckoning within a line, it is called **eṇṇu vaṇṇam**.

In *kuruntokai* 136, the subject matter flows through the end producing the **oluku vaṇṇam**:

காமம் காமம் என்ப காமம்
அணங்கும் பிணியு மன்றே துணங்கிக்
கடுத்தலுந் தணிதலு மின்றே யானே
குளகுமென் றுண்மதம் போலப்
பாணியு முடைத்தது காணுநர்ப் பெறினே

In *kuruntokai* 97, the subject matter is compact in lines 1, 3, and 4, producing the **orūu vaṇṇam**:

யானே ஈண்டை யேனே யென்னலனே
ஆளு நோயொடு கான லஃதே
துறைவன் றும்மு ரானே
மறையல ராகி மன்றத்தஃதே

Also in *ainkurunūru* 423, the **orūu vaṇṇam** is created:

மாமழை யிடியுத் தளிசொரிந் தன்றே
வாணுதல் பசப்பச் செலவயர்ந் தனையே
யாமே நிறுறுந் தமையலம்
ஆய்மல ருண்கணு நீர் நிறைந் தனவே

In *kuriñcippāṭṭu:77*, the **eṇṇu vaṇṇam** is produced by reckoning:

தில்லை பாலை கல்லிவர் முல்லை

akaippu vaṇṇam and tūṅkal vaṇṇam

The **akaippu vaṇṇam** is the effect produced when short and long vowels are not equally spread. The **tūṅkal vaṇṇam** is obtained by using metrical feet with three **acai** in an alternating manner, to produce the sound called **tūṅkal ōcai**. This process takes place in longer poetry, like a compilation known as **toṭar nilai ceyyul** which focus on particular themes.¹³³ According to another opinion, the **tūṅkal vaṇṇam** is obtained by using **vañci uriccīr**.¹³⁴ Examples:

In *kuru.110:1-2*, short and long vowels do not alternate but are unevenly spread, producing **akaippu vaṇṇam**:

வாரா ராயினும் வரினு மவர்நமக்

கியாரா கியரோ தோழி நீர

In *kali.70:15*, **akaippu vaṇṇam** is produced:

வாராய்நீ துறத்தலின் வருந்திய எமக்காங்கே

In *muttolāyiram 104:1-2*, which is a later text, the **tūṅkal vaṇṇam** is employed:

யானுடத் தானுணர்த்த யானுணரா விட்டபின்

றானுட யானுணர்த்தத் தானுணரான் தேனுடும்

¹³³ Pē:424, cey.542.

¹³⁴ Iḷam: 545, cey.531.

In *paṭṭ:1-2*, the **tūṅkal vaṇṇam** is produced by **vañci uriccīr**:

வசையில்புகழ் வயங்குவெண்மீன்
திசைதிரிந்து தெற்கேகினும்

ēntal vaṇṇam, **uruṭṭu vaṇṇam**, **kuṟuñcīr vaṇṇam**, and **muṭuku vaṇṇam**

If the same word is repeated in a line in order to emphasize what is said, there is **ēntal vaṇṇam**. The **vaṇṇam** called **uruṭṭu vaṇṇam** employs the technique of **arākam**: it has a rolling sound (**uruṇṭa ōcai**), unlike the **kuṟuñcīr vaṇṇam** which has a mellifluous sound (**nekiṭnta ōcai**). From the examples provided by the commentators, it seems like a sound produced by the letters **ṛ** and **ḷ** without long vowels. The last **vaṇṇam** is **muṭuku vaṇṇam**. It is similar to **uruṭṭu vaṇṇam** except that it crosses the boundary of a line with four metrical feet (**nārcīr aṭi**). The line has more than four feet. It has also been suggested that the line producing the **muṭuku vaṇṇam** is followed by a line with a different structure.¹³⁵ Examples:

In *pari.10:98*, **ēntal vaṇṇam** is produced by repetition of the same word:

அரந்தின்வாய் போன்ம் போன்ம் போன்ம்

In *pari.12:101* also, **ēntal vaṇṇam** is produced by repetition of the same word:

நன்பல நன்பல நன்பல வையை

In *aka.158:1*, **uruṭṭu vaṇṇam/arāka vaṇṇam** is produced:

உருமுரறு கருவிய பெருமழை தலைஇய

¹³⁵ Nacc:264, cey.233.

In *kali.33:10*, **uruṭṭu vaṇṇam/arāka vaṇṇam** is produced:

எரியுரு உறழு இலவ மலர

Another example provided by the commentators:

உருகெழு முருகிய முருமென வதிர்தொறு
மருகெழு சிறகொடு மணவரு மணிமயில்

In *kali.39:46*, **muṭuku vaṇṇam** is produced:

நெறியறி செறிகுறி புரிதிரி பறியா அறிவனை முந்துநீஇத்

In *kali.104:39-40*, **muṭuku vaṇṇam** is created:

இரிபெழு பதிர்பதிர் பிகந்துடன் பலர்நீங்க
வரிபரி பிறுபிறுபு குடர்சோரக் குத்தித்தன்

māṭṭu (fastening, wrapping)

This term literally means ‘fastening.’ In Tamil prosody, it refers to the technique of properly joining the words, which are separated by many other words occurring between them in a composition, so as to bring coherence to the subject matter of the composition. For example, in *akanāṇūru* 9, the words **en neñcē** (‘my heart’), which occur as the last two items in the poem, have to be joined with **pōki** (‘going; having gone’), **enātu** (‘without thinking’), **eyti** (‘reaching; having reached’), **kuṟuki** (‘getting closer’), **tīṇṭi** (‘touching; having touched’), and **tōyntaṇru kollō** (‘whether it immersed?’), which are spread across the lines in the poem. Many other words occur between all these words. The whole poem is analyzed in detail in the last chapter in this study, so only the relevant parts are reproduced here:

... ..

kuṇru piṇ oḷiyap **pōki** ... (line 14)

... .. ūr cēyt **tenātu** (line 15)

... ..

emmiṇum viraintuval **eyti** ... (line 17)

... ..

kaṇṇupuku mālai niṇṇōl **eyti** (line 20)

... .. **kuṟuki** (line 21)

... .. piṇṇakam **tīṇṭi** (line 22)

toṭikkai taivarat **tōyntaṇru kollō** (line 23)

... ..

meṇṇōl peṇanacaiic ceṇṇaven **neñcē** (line 26)

Components of Subject Matter

The nineteen features relevant to the subject matter of a Tamil composition (**ceyyuḷ**) are *nōkku*, *tiṇai*, *kaikōḷ*, *kūṟru*, *kētpōr*, *kaḷaṇ*, *kālam*, *payaṇ*, *meypṇāṭu*, *eccam*, *muṇṇam*, *poruḷ*, *tuṇai*, *ammai*, *aḷaku*, *toṇmai*, *tōl*, *viruntu*, and *pulaṇ*. Among them are conventions about aesthetic behavior (**vaṇappu iyal**) and are applicable to a compilation like an anthology or a long narrative poetry: *ammai*, *aḷaku*, *toṇmai*, *tōl*, *viruntu*, *iyaipu*, *pulaṇ*, and *īlaipu*. They are discussed first.

Conventions About the Aesthetic Behavior of Tamil Poetry

The feature **ammai** (< **amai** ‘to settle, be calm’) is so called because it reflects a contented or serene quality (**amaiti**). It is found in a didactic composition (**paṇuval**) which allows some exceptions by including non-didactic elements and is composed of a few gentle utterances (**moḷi**) and has a limited number of lines (maximum of five per poem).¹³⁶

¹³⁶ The post-classical anthology known as the *patiṇeṇkīḷkkaṇakku* is a good example, for

The feature **aḷaku** ‘beauty’ is attained when one composes metrical feet (**cīr**) with words that are appropriate for a composition (**ceyyuḷ**).¹³⁷ **tonmai** ‘antiquity’ belongs to ancient things (**paḷaimai**) which are combined with exposition/commentary (**urai**).¹³⁸ The feature **tōl** is found in compositions that narrate something supreme in gentle words and in compositions that narrate something in elaborate words.¹³⁹ **viruntu** belongs to a composition (**yāppu**) that talks about something novel (**putuvatu**).¹⁴⁰ When a composition ends with certain vowelless consonants (**orru: ṇ, ṇ, n, m, ṇ, y, r, l, v, l, and ḷ**), the feature is **iyaipu**.¹⁴¹ The feature is called **pulan** if one speaks perfectly without using words pertaining to specific residential neighborhoods (**cēri**) and the intent is revealed clearly without making the listener wonder about the meanings of those words.¹⁴² If a composition flows in this manner without containing numerous hard consonants (**valleḷuttu**) that are doubled and has more evenly spread **kuraḷaṭi** (four to six letters) than other lines (**cintaṭi, aḷavaṭi, neṭilaṭi,**

and **kaḷavaḷi nārpatu**. Cf. *Ḥam*:547, *cey*.536; *Nacc*:265-266, *cey*.235.

¹³⁷ E.g., classical Tamil anthologies. Cf. *Nacc*:266, *cey*.236.

¹³⁸ E.g., later works such as *peruntēvaṇār pāratam*, *takaṭūr yāṭṭirai*, and *cilappatikāram*. Cf. *Nacc*:267, *cey*.237.

¹³⁹ E.g., *malaipaṭukaṭām*. Cf. *Ḥam*:548, *cey*.539.

¹⁴⁰ E.g., post-classical poems such as the *muttoḷḷāyiram*, and later poems composed in the *antāti* and *kalampakam* genres. Cf. *Nacc*:268, *cey*.239; *Pē*:429, *cey*.551.

¹⁴¹ E.g. post-classical poems such as the *maṇimēkalai* and *utayaṇaṇ katai*. Cf. *Nacc*:269, *cey*.240; *Pē*:430, *cey*.552.

¹⁴² It seems that regional variations of the language are avoided in this type of composition. The example given by the commentators is a play by the name *viḷakkattār kūttu*. Cf. *Nacc*:269, *cey*.241; *Pē*:430, *cey*.553.

and **kaḷi neṭil aṭi**), and uses high sounding words (**ōṇkiya moḷi**, words with long vowels, soft consonants, and middle consonants), then the feature recognized is **īlaipu**.¹⁴³

Conventions About the Contents of Tamil Poetry

The components pertaining to the contents *per se* of classical Tamil poems are **nōkku**, **tiṇai**, **kaikōḷ**, **kūrṟu**, **kētpōr**, **kaḷaṇ**, **kālam**, **payaṇ**, **meypṇāṭu**, **eccam**, **muṇṇam**, **poruḷ**, and **turaḷ**. The component **nōkku** ‘gaze, perspective’ actually refers to two things: the skillful crafting of a composition in a manner that is appealing to the listener, and the art of understanding the intent of a composition.¹⁴⁴ The term **tiṇai** is generic and refers to poetic themes which are subsumed under two basic themes known as the **akam** ‘interior’ and the **puṇam** ‘exterior.’ The poetic conventions followed when composing a poem dealing with the themes of clandestine love (**kaḷavu**) and marital love (**karpu**) are referred to by the term **kaikōḷ** ‘taking up certain conducts.’ The term **kūrṟu** ‘proclamation, statement’ refers to the poetic conventions that are followed when the *dramatis personae* speak in a composition employing the **akam** theme. Similarly, the term **kētpōr** ‘listeners’ refers to the poetic conventions followed when creating the *dramatis personae* who are addressed by the speakers who make the **kūrṟu**. **kaḷaṇ** and **kālam** respectively refer to the context and time when the theme focused upon in a composition is supposed to have taken place. The result of the theme of the composition is denoted by the term **payaṇ**

¹⁴³ Commentators say that this feature, **īlaipu**, is applicable to songs (**icai-p-pāṭṭu**) and note that songs which are like the *kaḷi* and *paripāṭal* reflect this component. Cf. Nacc:270, cey.242; Pē:431, cey.554.

¹⁴⁴ The motivated reader must seek the pleasure of reading Pēraciriyar’s elegant and sophisticated discussion of *akanāṇūru* 4, to know what exactly the theoreticians of Tamil poetry mean by **nōkku** (Pē:279-282, cey.416).

‘yield.’ The component **meyppāṭu** ‘physical expression’ is the process of bringing out one’s inner emotions resulting in cloudy eyes, goose bumps, etc. According to one commentator, it is the technique that reveals in one’s physical appearance the fiery essence of the subject matter (**poruḷ piḷampu**) perceived through **nōkku**.¹⁴⁵ The technique of inferring what is implied by the statements made in a poem is called **eccam** ‘remainder.’ The term **munnam** ‘previous, before, in front of’ refers to the technique of making the subject matter understandable only through one’s knowledge of the poetic conventions. The component **poruḷ vakai** ‘kinds of subject matter’ refers to what is composed by a poet transcending the physical reality and the established conventions about the various **tiṇai**. On the other hand, **turai** ‘section, mode’ is the technique of conforming to the established conventions regarding the flora and fauna of the various **tiṇai**.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, Nacc:250, cey.204.

SCANNING A FEW POEMS

When scanning a classical Tamil poem, its core structural components and aesthetic aspects are evaluated first in order to know about the prosodic features of the poem. A discussion about the components relating to the poem's subject matter would be a subsequent concern. Here, some classical poems are scanned for understanding their prosody.

kuruntokai 122:

பைங்காற் கொக்கின் புன்புறத் தன்ன	பைங்-காற் கொக்-கின் புன்-புறத் தன்-ன
paiṅkāṛ kokkiṇ puṇpurat tanna	nēr-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nirai nēr-nēr
குண்டுநீ ராம்பலுங் கூம்பின வினியே	குண்-டு-நீ ராம்-பலுங் கூம்-பின வினி-யே
kuṇṭuṇī rāmpaluṅ kūmpiṇa viṇiyē	nērpū-nēr nēr-nirai nēr-nirai nirai-nēr
வந்தன்று வாழியோ மாலை	வந்-தன்று வா-ழியோ மா-லை
vantanru vāḷiyō mālai	nēr-nērpū nēr-nirai nēr-nēr
ஒருதா னன்றே கங்குலு முடைத்தே	ஒரு-தா னன்-னே கங்-குலு முடைத்-தே
orutā ṇaṇṇē kaṅkulu muṭaittē	nirai-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nirai nirai-nēr

This poem is in the *ācīriyam* meter and has four lines (*aṭi*). All the lines except the penultimate have four metrical feet (*cīr*) each. They are called *nēraṭi* (ten to fourteen *eḷuttu*) or *aḷavaṭi* (four *cīr*). The penultimate line has three feet containing seven letters (*eḷuttu*), so is a *cintaṭi*. The lines in the poem contain *iyal acai* (*nēr* and *nirai*) and a *uri acai* (*nērpū*). All the feet are made up of two *acai*, and so are *īr-acai-c-cīr*. Two different metrical bindings — *ācīriya-t-taḷai* and *iyar cīr veṇ taḷai* — are employed in this poem. The metrical binding (*taḷai*) between the first three feet in the first line is *nēr onru ācīriya-t-taḷai*. The third and fourth feet in the first line produce *iyar cīr veṇ taḷai*. The second line has three different bindings. The binding between the first and second feet in this line is *nēr onru ācīriya-t-taḷai*, that between the second and third feet is *iyar cīr veṇ taḷai*, and that between the third and fourth feet is *nirai onru*

āciriya-t-taḷai. The feet in the third line produce **iyar cīr veṇ taḷai**. The binding between the first and second feet and similarly between the second and third feet in the last line is **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai**. The third and fourth feet in this line produce **nirai onru āciriya-t-taḷai**.

The sound (**ōcai**) produced by the feet in this poem is an uninterrupted **akaval ōcai**. There would be four beats per line except in the penultimate which would have three. Each beat falls on the first part of the first **acai** of each foot. The extra-short **u** (**kuṛriyal ukaram**) in the **uriccīr (nēru)** must not be stressed.

The first three lines contain the alliteration (**toṭai**) called **mellina etukai**, produced by the second soft **eḷuttu** in each line. The third line has what is known as **cīr vakai varukka mōnai** produced by the same consonant added to different vowels (வ and வா), occurring in different feet within a line. The last line has **polippu iyaipu** generated by the similarity between their last **eḷuttu**, which is **ē**, in the first and third feet **from the back**. All the letters participating in the alliteration process are marked in bold type.

Three types of **vaṇṇam** are produced here. The **cittira vaṇṇam** results from the mixture of short and long vowels. The **purappāṭṭu vaṇṇam** is produced by the second line which ends with the vowel **ē**, as if indicating the end of the poem but in fact it does not. The other **vaṇṇam** is the **oluku vaṇṇam**, which results from the uninterrupted flow of the subject matter (**poruḷ**) of the poem.

kuruntokai 23:

அகவன் மகளே யகவன் மகளே
akavaṇḍ makaḷē akavaṇḍ makaḷē

அக - வன் | மக - ளே | யக - வன் | மக - ளே
nirai-nēr | nirai-nēr | nirai-nēr | nirai-nēr

மனவுக்கோப் பன்ன நன்னெடுங் கூந்தல்
maṇavukkōp paṇṇa nanṇeṭuṇ kūntal

மனவுக்-கோப் | பன்-ன | நன்-னெடுங் | கூந்-தல்
niraipu-nēr | nēr-nēr | nēr-nirai | nēr-nēr

அகவன் மகளே பாடுக பாட்டே
akavaṇ makalē pātuka pāṭṭē

அக-வன் | மக-ளே | பா-டுக | பாட்-டே
nirai-nēr | nirai-nēr | nēr-nirai | nēr-nēr

இன்னும் பாடுக பாட்டே அவர்
iṇṇum pātuka pāṭṭē avar

இன்-னும் | பா-டுக | பாட்-டே | அவர்
nēr-nēr | nēr-nirai | nēr-nēr | nirai

நன்னெடுங் குன்றம் பாடிய பாட்டே

nanṇeṭuṇ kuṇṇam pāṭiya pāṭṭē நன்-னெடுங் | குன்-றம் | பா-டிய | பாட்-டே
nēr-nirai | nēr-nēr | nēr-nirai | nēr-nēr

This poem also is in the **ācīriyam** meter and has five lines of equal length in the sense that they are composed of four feet each. The **iyal acai** (**nēr** and **nirai**) and a **uri acai** (**niraipu**) are used. All the feet except the last one in the penultimate line are made up of two **acai** each, and so are called **īr-acai-c-cīr**. The penultimate foot ends with an **ōr-acai-c-cīr**, a foot with one **acai**. It can be called a **taṇi-c-col** 'lone word' or a **vali-y-acai**, which stands separate from the rest of the line waiting to be joined with the next line for making sense. The penultimate line is an example of a **cor-cīr-aṭi**. All the lines except the penultimate are **nēraṭi** (ten to fourteen **eḷuttu**) or **aḷavaṭi** (four feet). The penultimate line, which contains only nine letters (**eḷuttu**), is not a **nēraṭi** by the earlier convention but would be one by the later convention which measures a line by the number of metrical feet of which it is composed of.

The metrical binding (**taḷai**) between the different feet in the first line is **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai**, so the line can be called an **iyarcīr vellāṭi**. The bindings in the second line are **nēr onru ācīriya-t-taḷai**, between the first three feet, and **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** between the third and fourth feet. An

identical pattern of binding exists in the third line: **nēr onru āciriya-t-talai**, between the first three feet, and **iyarcīr veṇṇ talai** between the third and fourth feet. The binding between the first two feet in line four is **nēr onru āciriya-t-talai**, while the binding between the second and third is **iyarcīr veṇṇ talai**, which recurs between the third and fourth feet. The last line alternates between **iyarcīr veṇṇ talai** (first and second feet; third and fourth feet) and **nēr onru āciriya-t-talai** (second and third).

The sound produced by the feet is **akaval**. There would be four beats per line, and each beat would fall on the first part of the first **acai** in each foot. The penultimate line seems to provide the option of having just three beats, skipping a beat for its last **ōr-acai-c-cīr**. The short **u** (**murriyal ukaram**) in the **uriccīr** (**niraipu**) need not be stressed.

Several alliterations (**toṭai**) are produced in this poem. The letters making up the alliterations are marked in bold type. There is **polippu mōṇai** in the first line, resulting from the first and third feet which are identical (அகவன்). The **polippu iyaipu** in this line derives from the first and third feet from the back (மகளே). There is **aṭi-iṭai-iṭṭa-mōṇai** from the first feet in lines one and three (அகவன்), while an **aṭi-iṭai-iṭṭa-yaipu** results from the last feet in lines three and five (பாட்டே). The second **eḷuttu** in the first feet of the last two lines produce the **aṭi etukai**.

The first and third lines produce **cittira vaṇṇam** by mixing short and long vowels. Also, in line three, the last foot produces the **purappāṭṭu vaṇṇam**, because it provides a false sense of completion to the poem.

puṛaṇāṇūru 11:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. அரிமயிர்த் திரண்முன்கை
arimayirt tiraṇmunṇkai | அரி-மயிர்த் திரண்-முன்-கை
nirai-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr |
| 2. வாலிழை மடமங்கையர்
vāliḷai maṭamaṇkaiyar | வா-லிழை மட-மங்-கையர்
nēr-nirai nirai-nēr-nirai |
| 3. வரிமணற் புனைபாவைக்குக்
varimaṇar puṇaipāvaikkuk | வரி-மணற் புனை-பா-வைக்குக்
nirai-nirai nirai-nēr-nērpū |

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4. குலவுச்சினைப் பூக்கொய்து
kulavuccinaip pūkkoytu | குலவுச் -சினைப் பூக்-கொய்து
niraipu-nirai nēr-nērpū |
| 5. தண்பொருதைப் புனல்பாயும்
tanporunaip puṇalpāyum | தண்-பொரு-தைப் புனல்-பா-யும்
nēr-nirai-nēr nirai-nēr-nēr |
| 6. விண்பொருபுகழ் விறல்வஞ்சிப்
viṇporupukaḷ viṇalvañcip | விண் -பொரு-புகழ் விறல் -வஞ்-சிப்
nēr-nirai-nirai nirai-nēr-nēr |
| 7. பாடல்சான்ற விறல்வேந்தனும்மே
pāḷalcāṇra viṇalvēntaṇummē | பா-டல்-சான்-ற விறல் -வேந்-தனும்-மே
nēr-nēr-nēr-nēr nirai-nēr-nirai-nēr |
| 8. வெப்புடைய வரண்கடந்து
veppuṭaiya varaṇkaṭantu | வெப்-புடை-ய வரண் -கடந்து
nēr-nirai-nēr nirai-niraipu |
| 9. துப்புறுவர் புறம்பெற்றிசினே
tuppuṇavar puṇamperricinē | துப்-புறு-வர் புறம்-பெற்-றிசி-னே
nēr-nirai-nēr nirai-nēr-nirai-nēr |
| 10. புறம்பெற்ற வயவேந்தன்
puṇamperra vayavēntaṇ | புறம்-பெற்-ற வய-வேந்-தன்
nirai-nēr-nēr nirai-nēr-nēr |
| 11. மறம்பாடிய பாடினியும்மே
maṇampāṭiya pāṭiniyumme | மறம்-பா-டிய பா-டினி-யும்-மே
nirai-nēr-nirai nēr-nirai-nēr-nēr |
| 12. ஏருடைய விழுக்கழஞ்சிற
ēruṭaiya viḷukkaḷaṇciṇ | ஏ-ருடை-ய விழுக் -கழஞ்-சிற
nēr-nirai-nēr nirai-nirai-nēr |
| 13. சீருடைய விழைபெற்றிசினே
cīruṭaiya viḷaiperricinē | சீ-ருடை-ய விழை -பெற்-றிசி-னே
nēr-nirai-nēr nirai-nēr-nirai-nēr |
| 14. இழைபெற்ற பாடிகிக்குக்
iḷaiperra pāṭinikkuk | இழை -பெற்-ற பா-டினிக்-குக்
nirai-nēr-nēr nēr-niraipu |
| 15. குரல்புணர்சீர்க் கொளவல்பாண்
kuralpuṇarcīrk koḷaivalpāṇ | குரல் -புணர்-சீர்க் கொள-வல்-பாண்
nirai-nirai-nēr nirai-nēr-nēr |
| 16. மகனும்மே யெனவாங்
makaṇummē yeṇavāṅ | மக-னும்-மே யென-வாங்
nirai-nēr-nēr nirai-nēr |
| 17. கொள்ளுற் புரிந்த தாமரை
koḷḷaḷar purinta tāmarai | கொள்-ளுற் புரிந்-த தா-மரை
nēr-nirai nirai-nēr nēr-nirai |

18. வெள்ளி நாராற் பூப்பெற் றிசினே வெள்-ளி |நா-ராற் |பூப்-பெற் |றிசி-னே
 vellī nārār pūpper ṛiṇiṇē nēr-nēr | nēr-nēr | nēr-nēr | nirai-nēr

This is a poem which has to be scanned by the earlier convention which construes metrical feet (*cīr*) and lines (*aṭi*) in terms of the number of letters (*eḷuttu*) in them. Accordingly, this poem is mostly in the *vañci* meter and has eighteen lines. All the lines except the last two have two metrical feet each. Such a *vañci* poem is called a *nēr nilai vañci* or *cama nilai vañci*. The penultimate line has three feet and the last line has four feet, all made up of *iyarṇcīr*, so the poem ends in the *āciriyaṁ* meter.

The various *acai* here used are *nēr*, *nirai*, *nērpū*, and *niraipu*. The various *cīr* used are *iyarṇcīr*, *āciriya uriccīr*, *veṇṇcīr*, and *vañci uriccīr*. Examples: அரிமயிர்த் (*nirai-nirai*), குலவுச்சினை (*niraipu-nirai*), திரண்முன்கை (*nirai-nēr-nēr*), and புனை-பா-வைக்குக் (*nirai-nēr-nērpū*). There are five metrical feet, which may seem to have been made up of four *acai*, and they appear in alternate lines: பாடல்சான்ற and விறல்வேந்தனும்மே (line 7); புறம்பெற்றிசினே (line 9); பாடினியும்மே (line 11); and விழைபெற்றிசினே (line 13). The later convention would, in fact, treat these feet as made up of four *acai* and call them *nāl-acai-c-cīr* or *potu-c-cīr*. The earlier convention would not consider them as four *acai-c-cīr*, because it understands them in terms of the number of letters (*eḷuttu*) they contain.

Every metrical foot here follows the rule that the maximum number of *eḷuttu* allowed is six per foot in a *vañci* line. Examples: வாலிழை has three *eḷuttu*; அரிமயிர்த் has four; மடமங்கையர் has five; and விறல்வேந்தனும்மே has six.

Every line also follows the rule that a *vañci* line can have a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve *eḷuttu*. Accordingly, the lines in this poem have a minimum of seven and a maximum of ten *eḷuttu*. The following lines have seven *eḷuttu* each: குலவுச்சினைப் பூக்கொய்து (line 4), இழைபெற்ற பாடினிக்கு (line 14), and மகனும்மே வெனவாங் (line 16); the following lines have eight *eḷuttu* each: அரிமயிர்த் திரண்முன்கை (line 1), வாலிழை மடமங்கையர் (line 2), வரிமணற் புனைபாவைக்குக் (line 3),

தண்பொருதைப் புனல்பாயும் (line 5), வெப்புடைய வரண்கடந்து (line 8), and புறம்பெற்ற வயவேந்தன் (line 10); the following have nine **eluttu** each: விண்பொருபுகழ் விறல்வஞ்சிப் (line 6), ஒருடைய விழுக்கழஞ்சிற (line 12), and குரல்புணர்ச்சீர்க் கொளவல்பாண் (line 15). Even the last two lines producing the **āciriyam** meter have nine **eluttu** each. The following lines have ten **eluttu** each: பாடல்சான்ற விறல்வேந்தனும்மே (line 7), துப்புறுவர் புறம்பெற்றிசினே (line 9), மறம்பாடிய பாடனியும்மே (line 11), and சீருடைய விழைபெற்றிசினே (line 13).

By the earlier convention, metrical binding (**talai**) between the various feet in a **vañci** line is not as relevant as is the type of the feet.¹

The sound in a **vañcippā** is confined to each foot, and therefore has to be obtained that way. The sound is **tūṅkal ōcai** ‘suspended sound, slowly swaying sound.’ One can say that the **tūṅkal ōcai** is confined between two consecutive beats. In this poem, the penultimate line has three beats and the last line has four, each beat falling on the first part of the first **acai** of each foot. All other lines could have either two or four beats. If there are two beats, each would fall on the first part of the first **acai** of each foot and the time measure (**layam**) has to be slow, as would be in the case of a foot having four **eluttu** (அரிமயிர்த்) as opposed to the one having six (விறல்வேந்தனும்மே). If the lines have to have four beats, the beat would fall on the first part of the first **acai** and the latter part of the second **acai**, when the foot has less than six **eluttu**. If the foot has six **eluttu** (விறல்வேந்தனும்மே), the beat would fall on the first part of the first **acai** as well as on the first part of the third **acai**. The extra-short **u** (**kurriyal ukaram**) at the end of a **uriccīr** (**nērpū** or **niraipu**) must not be stressed. The other kind of short **u** (**murriyal ukaram**) at the end of a **uriccīr** (**nērpū** or **niraipu**) need not be stressed.

¹ Pē:205, cey.367.

Here the poem is given with the places where the beats could fall marked in bold type:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. அரிமயிர் த் திரண்முன்கை | அரிமயிர் த் திரண்முன்கை |
| 2. வாலிழை மடமங்கையர் | வாலிழை மடமங்கையர் |
| 3. வரிமணற்புனை பாவைக்குக் | வரிமணற் புனை பாவைக் குக் |
| 4. குலவுச்சினைப் பூக்கொய்து | குலவுச்சினைப் பூக்கொய்து |
| 5. தண்பொருதைப் புனல்பாயும் | தண்பொருதைப் புனல் பாயும் |
| 6. விண்பொருபுகழ் விறல்வஞ்சிப் | விண்பொருபுகழ் விறல்வஞ்சி |
| 7. பாடல்சான்ற விறல்வேந்தனும்மே | பாடல்சான்ற விறல்வேந் தனும்மே |
| 8. வெப்புடைய வரண்கடந்து | வெப்புடைய வரண்கடந்து |
| 9. துப்புறுவர் புறம்பெற்றிசினே | துப்புறுவர் புறம்பெற்றிசினே |
| 10. புறம்பெற்ற வயவேந்தன் | புறம்பெற்ற வயவேந்தன் |
| 11. மறம்பாடிய பாடிகியும்மே | மறம்பாடிய பாடிகியும்மே |
| 12. ஏருடைய விழுக்கமுஞ்சிற் | ஏருடைய விழுக்கமுஞ்சிற் |
| 13. சீருடைய விழைபெற்றிசினே | சீருடைய விழைபெற்றிசினே |
| 14. இழைபெற்ற பாடிகிக்குக் | இழைபெற்ற பாடிகிக்குக் |
| 15. குரல்புணர்சீர்க் கொளவல்பாண் | குரல்புணர் சீர்க் கொளவல்பாண் |
| 16. மகனும்மே யெனவாங் | மகனும்மே யெனவாங் |
| 17. கொள்ளுற் புரிந்த தாமரை | கொள்ளுற் புரிந்த தாமரை |
| 18. வெள்ளி நாராற் பூப்பெற் றிசினே | வெள்ளி நாராற் பூப்பெற் றிசினே |

The following are the alliterations (toṭai):

- varukka mōṇai in lines 2 and 3 — வாலிழை ; வரிமணற்
 iṇai mōṇai in line 6 — விண்பொருபுகழ் விறல்வஞ்சி
 vaḷi mōṇai in lines 9 and 10 — துப்புறுவர் ; புறம்பெற்ற
 neṭil mōṇai in lines 12 and 13 — ஏருடைய ; சீருடைய
 cīr vakai varukka etukai in line 1 — அரிமயிர் த் திரண்முன்கை
 aṭi etukai in lines 5 and 6 — தண்பொருதைப் ; விண்பொருபுகழ்
 aṭi etukai in lines 8 and 9 — வெப்புடைய ; துப்புறுவர்

aṭi etukai in lines 10 and 11 — புறம் பெற்ற; மறும் பாடிய
 aṭi etukai in lines 16 and 17 — கொள்ளுல் ; வெள்ளி
 talai āku etukai in lines 12 and 13 — ஒருடைய ; சீருடைய
 iṭai-iṭṭa-etukai in lines 1 and 3 — அரிமயிர்; வரிமணற்
 aṭi iyaipu in lines 3 and 4 — புனைபாவைக்குக் ; பூக்கொய்து

The **vaṇṇam** are: vallicai vaṇṇam in line 9; kuṟuñcīr vaṇṇam in line 1; cittira vaṇṇam in line 7; purappāṭṭu vaṇṇam in lines 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15; akaippu vaṇṇam in line 17.

puranāṇūru 4:

1. வாள் வலந்தர மறுப்பட்டன வாள் |வலந்-தர |மறுப்-பட்-டன
 vāl valantara maruppaṭṭana nēr | nirai-nirai | nirai-nēr-nirai
2. செவ்வானத்து வனப்புப்போன்றன செவ்-வா-னத்து |வனப்புப்-போன்-றன
 cevvaṇṇattu vaṇappuppōṇṇa nēr-nēr-nēru | niraipu-nēr-nirai
3. தாள் களங்கொளக் கழல்பறைந்தன தாள் |களங்-கொளக் |கழல் -பறைந்-தன
 tāl kaṇṅkolak kaḷalparaṇṇa nēr | nirai-nirai | nirai-nēr-nirai
4. கொல்லேற்றின் மருப்புப்போன்றன கொல்ல் -லேற்-றின் |மருப்புப்-போன்-றன
 koll lēṇṇi maruppuṇṇa nēr-nēr-nēr | niraipu-nēr-nirai
5. தோல் துவைத்தம்பிற் றுளைதோன்றுவ தோல் |துவைத்-தம்-பிற் |றுளை-தோன்-றுவ
 tōl tuvaitampir ruḷaitōṇṇu nēr | nirai-nēr-nēr | nirai-nēr-nirai
6. நிலைக்கொராஅ விலக்கம்போன்றன நிலைக் -கொரா-அ |விலக் -கம்-போன்-றன
 nilaikkorāa vilakkampōṇṇa nirai-nirai-nēr | nirai-nēr-nēr-nirai
7. மாவே எறிபதத்தா னிடங்காட்டக் மாவே |எறி-பதத்-தா |னிடங்-காட்-டக்
 māvē eṇipattatā ṇiṭaṅkāṭṭak nēr-nēr | nirai-nirai-nēr | nirai-nēr-nēr

- | | |
|--|---|
| 8. கறும்பொருத செவ்வாயான்
karuḷporuta cevṽāyān | கறும்-பொரு-த செவ்-வா-யான்
nirai-nirai-nēr nēr-nēr-nēr |
| 9. எருத்துவவ்விய புலிபோன்றன
eruttuvavviya pulipōṇṇaṇa | எருத்து-வவ்-விய புலி-போன்-றன
niraipu-nēr-nirai nirai-nēr-nirai |
| 10. களிறு கதவெறியாச் சிவந்துராஅய்
kaḷiru kataveriyāc civanturāy | களிறு கத-வெறி-யாச் சிவந்-துரா-அய்
niraipu nirai-nirai-nēr nirai-nirai-nēr |
| 11. நுதிமழுங்கிய வெண்கோட்டான்
nutimaḷuṅkiya veṅkōṭṭān | நுதி-மழுங்-கிய வெண்-கோட்-டான்
nirai-nirai-nirai nēr-nēr-nēr |
| 12. உயிருண்ணுங் கூற்றுப்போன்றன
uyiruṇṇuṅ kūṇṇupṇōṇṇaṇa | உயி-ருண்-ணுங் கூற்றுப்-போன்-றன
nirai-ner-nēr nērpu-nēr-nirai |
| 13. நீயே அலங்குளைப் பரீஇயிவுளிப்
nīyē alaṅkuḷaip parīiyivuliḥ | நீ-யே அலங்-குளைப் பரீஇ-யிவு-ளிப்
nēr-nēr nirai-nirai nirai-nirai-nēr |
| 14. பொலந்தேர்மிசைப் பொலிவுதோன்றி
polantērmicaip polivutōṇṇi | பொலந்-தேர்-மிசைப் பொலிவு-தோன்-றி
nirai-nēr-nirai niraipu-nēr-nēr |
| 15. மாக்கட னிவந்தெழுதரும்
mākkata ṇivanteḷutarum | மாக்-கட னிவந்-தெழு-தரும்
nēr-nirai nirai-nirai-nirai |
| 16. செஞ்ஞாயிற்றுக் கவினைமாதோ
ceṇṇāyirruḥ kavinaimātō | செஞ்-ஞா-யிற்றுக் கவி-னைமா-தோ
nēr-nēr-niraipu nirai-nirai-nēr |
| 17. அனையை யாகன் மாறே
aṇaiyai yākaṇ māṇē | அனை-யை யா-கன் மா-றே
nirai-nēr nēr-nēr nēr-nēr |
| 18. தாயி றுவாக் குழவி போல
tāyi ṛuvāk kuḷavi pōla | தா-யி று-வாக் குழ-வி போ-ல
nēr-nēr nēr-nēr nirai-nēr nēr-nēr |
| 19. ஓவாது கூஉநின் னுடற்றியோர் நாடே
ōvātu kūuṇiṇ ṇuṭarriyōr nāṭē | ஓ-வாது கூஉ-நின் னுடற்-றியோர் நா-டே
nēr-nērpu nēr-nēr nirai-nirai nēr-nēr |

This is an excellent example of a **vañcippā** with two or three feet in its lines, and therefore is called a **mayakku aṭi vañcippā** 'vañci poem in mixed lines.' The poem has nineteen lines, employs the **vañci** meter in sixteen lines, and ends in the **ācīriyam** meter used in the last three lines. The penultimate line has four feet, while the preceding line has three. The last line has four feet.

The **acai** used here are the four basic ones: **nēr**, **nirai**, **nēru**, and **niraipu**. The types of **cīr** used are **ōr-acai-c-cīr**, **iyar-cīr**, **uri-c-cīr**, **veṇ-cīr**, and **vañci uri-c-cīr**: வாள், வலந்-தர, செவ்வா-னத்து, துவைத்-தம்-பிற், and மறுப்-பட்டன respectively.

The minimum number of **eḷuttu** in a foot is three (செவ்வானத்து) and the maximum is six (விலக்கம்போன்றன). The minimum number of **eḷuttu** in a line employing the **vañci** meter is eight (செவ்வானத்து வனப்புப்போன்றன) and the maximum is twelve (களிறு கதவெறியாச் சிவந்துராஅய்).

Each of the first feet in lines 1, 3, 5, and 10 is made up of a single **acai**. The first feet in lines 7 and 13 are composed of two **acai** each. In either case, the first foot in these lines (1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 13) is a refrain called **kūṇ**.

The sound (**ōcai**) achieved here is **tūṇkal**, a suspended sound confined to each **cīr**. Two possible schemes of placing the beats are suggested here. One is to have four beats per **vañci** line, and the other is to have five beats for every **vañci** line that starts with a refrain (**kūṇ**) and four beats per all the rest of the **vañci** lines. In either case, the last three lines which are in the **ācīriyam** meter would have respectively three, four, and four beats per line, the beat falling on the first part of the first **acai** in every foot. If the **vañci** lines have four beats per line, the beats would fall on the following parts: first part of the first **acai** of the refrain; second part of the first **acai** of an **īr-acai-c-cīr**; first part of the first **acai**, as well as the first part of the third **acai** if the **cīr** has three **acai** or six **eḷuttu**.

paripāṭal 1:

The following **paripāṭal** accommodates several kinds of lines (**aṭi**) and meters (**pā**). It has five components, namely **taravu**, **koccakam**, **arākam**, **curitakam**, and **eṇ**. The intended emotion of the poem is love expressed toward the deity Viṣṇu. Here, the poem is not analyzed by the structure of its metrical feet (**cīr**), but its various components are noted.

ஆயிரம் விரித்த வணங்குடை யருந்தலை
தீயுமிழ் திறனொடு முடிமிசை அணவர
மாயுடை மலர்மார்பின் மையில்வால் வளைமேனிச்
சேயுயர் பணைமிசை யெழில் வேழமேந்திய
வாய்வாங்கும் வளைநாஞ்சி லொருகுழை யொருவனை

The above section of the poem is the **taravu** ‘bringing’ because it is an introduction. It introduces the deity, Tirumāl (Viṣṇu), who is praised in the poem.

எரிமலர் சினைஇய கண்ணை புவை
விரிமலர் புரையு மேனியை மேனித்
திருஞெமர்ந்த தமர்ந்த மார்பினை மார்பிற்
றெரிமணி பிறங்கும் பூணினை மால்வரை
எரிதிரிந் தன்ன பொன்புனை யுடுக்கையை
சேவலங் கொடியோய்தின் வலவயி நிறுத்து
மேவலுட் பணிந்தமை கூறும்
நாவ லந்தண ரருமறைப் பொருளே

This section of the poem is the **koccakam** ‘pleats’, which basically stands for a feature that is seen when shorter lines intercede longer lines. Here, the line marked in bold type is shorter than the others.

இணைபிரி யணிதுணி பிணிமணி யெரிபுரை விடரிடு சுடர்படர்
பொலம்புனை வினைமலர் தெரிதிர டெரியுரு ளிகன்மிகு முரண்
மிகுகட றருமணி யொடுமுத்தி யாத்தநொணி? நெறிசெறி
வெறியுறு முறலவிற லணங்கணங்கு விரற்றாணி? துணிமணி

This section also is a **curitakam** and is in the **ācīriyam** meter. It wraps up the subject matter (**poruḷ**) in which the poem has been engaged so far.

விறன்மிசு விழுச்சீ ரந்தணர் காக்கும்
 அறனு மார்வலர்க் களியு நீ
திறனிலோர்த் திருத்திய தீதுதீர் சிறப்பின்
 மறனு மாற்றலர்க் கணங்கு நீ
அங்கணைர் வானத் தணிநிலாத் திகழ்தரும்
 திங்களுந் தெறுகதிர்க் கனலியு நீ
ஐந்தலை யுயரிய வணங்குடை யருத்திறல்
 மைந்துடை யொருவனு மடங்கலு நீ
நலமுழு தனையு புகரறு காட்சிப்
 புலமும் புவனு நாற்றமு நீ
வலனுய ரெழிலியு மாக விசம்பும்
 நிலனு நீடிய விமயமு நீ

These are six couplets and called **pēren** ‘large count.’ The beginning of each couplet is marked in bold type.

அதனால்

This is a refrain called **tani-c-col** ‘lone word.’

இன்னோ ரனையை யினையை யாலென
 அன்னோர் யாமிவட் காணு மையிற்
 பொன்னணி நேமி வலங்கொண் டேந்திய
 மன்னுயிர் முதல்வனை யாதலின்
 நின்னோ ரனையைநின் புகழொடும் பொலிந்தே

This is a **curitakam** which wraps up the subject matter provided so far and is in the **ācīriyam** meter.

நின்னொக்கும் புகழ்நிழலவை
 பொன்னொக்கு முடையவை
 புள்ளின் கொடியவை புரிவன யினவை

எள்ளுநர்க் கடந்தட்ட விகனே மியவை
மண்ணுறு மணிபா யுருவினவை
எண்ணிறந்த புகழவை யெழின்மார்பினவை

These are the components **iṭai eṇ** 'intermediary count', **cirreṇ** 'small count', and **pēreṇ** 'big count.' Lines with two metrical feet constitute the **iṭai eṇ**. The lines with four metrical feet get the name **cirreṇ**. The couplet which occurs in the last part is the **pēreṇ**.

ஆங்கு

This is a refrain (**tani-c-col** 'lone word').

காமரு சுற்றமோ டொருங்குநின் னடியுறை
யாமியைந் தொன்றுபு வைகலும் பொலிகென
ஏழு நெஞ்சத்தேம் பரவுதும்
வாய்மொழிப் புலவதின் குணிழ நெழுதே

This is the final wrapping, a **curitakam** which ends the poem in the **āciriyam** meter.

kalittokai 53:

This is an **ottālicaikkali**. Here, the poem is not analyzed by the structure of its metrical feet (**cīr**), but its various components are noted.

வறனுறல் அறியாத வழையமை நறுஞ்சாரல்
விறன்மலை வியலறை வீழ்பிடி உழையதா
மறமிகு வேழந்தன் மாறுகொள் மைந்தினால்
புகர்நுதல் புண்செய்த புய்கோடு போல
உயர்முகை நறுங்காந்தள் நாடோறும் புதிதீன
அயல்நந்தி அணிபெற அருவியார்த் திழிதரும்
பயமழை தலைஇய பாடுசால் விறல்வெற்ப

This is **taravu**, which is an introduction with seven lines.

மறையினின் மணந்தாங்கே மருவறத் துறந்தபின்
இறைவனே நெகிழ்போட ஏற்பவும் ஒல்லுமன்
அயலலர் தூற்றலின் ஆய்நலன் இழந்தகண்
கயலுமிழ் நீர்போலக் கண்பனி கலுழாக்கால்

இனியசெய் தகன்றுநீ இன்னுதாத் துறத்தலின்
பனியிவள் படரெனப் பரவாமை ஒல்லுமன்
ஊரலர் தூற்றலின் ஒளியோடி நறுதுதல்
பீரல ரணிகொண்டு பிறைவனப் பிழவாக்கால்

அஞ்சலென் றகன்றுநீ அருளாது துறத்தலின்
நெஞ்சழி துயரட நிறுப்பவும் இயையுமன்
நனவினால் நலம்வாட நலிதந்த நடுங்கலூர்
களவினால் அழிவுற்றுக் கங்குலும் ஆற்றாக்கால்

The above three verses are **tāḷicai**. They focus on one theme.

எனவாங்கு

This is a refrain, called the **aṭai-nilai-k-kiḷavi** ‘word which stands enclosed.’

விளியானோ யுழந்தானு என்றேழி நின்மலை
முளிவுற வருந்திய முளமுதிர் சிறுதினை
தளிபெறத் தகைபெற் றுங்குநின்
அளிபெற நந்துமிவ ளாய்துதற் கவினே

This is the **curitakam** with four lines, which ends the poem in the **āciriyam** meter. It is also known as the **pōkku** because it states the intent and makes the poem reach an end without saying anything more. It also collects and contains the matters stated in the **taravu** and **tāḷicai**.

kalittokai 51; a **kalivenṇā**:

This poem exceeds the normal twelve lines. Also it conveys the subject matter (**poruḷ**) directly, not obliquely. The lines are composed of **iyarcīr** and **veṇṇīr**. The lines are **aḷavaṭi** and the letters they contain

range from ten to thirteen per line. The last line has three metrical feet like a **venṇā** line and ends with a **nirai acai** making up its last foot.

சுடர்த்தொடஇ கேளாய் தெருவில்நாம் ஆடும்
மணர்சிறற்றில் காலின் சிதையா அடைச்சிய
கோதை பரிந்து வரிப்பந்து கொண்டோடி
நோதக்க செய்யுஞ் சிறுபட்டி மேலோர்நாள்
அன்னையும் யானும் இருந்தேமா இல்லிரே
உண்ணுநீர் வேட்டேன் எனவந்தாற் கன்னை
அடர்பொற் சிரகத்தால் வாக்கிச் சுடரிழாய்
உண்ணுநீ ருட்டிவா என்ற ளெனயானுந்
தன்னை யறியாது சென்றேன்மற் றென்னை
வளமுன்கை பற்றி நலியத் தெருமந்திட்
அன்னா யிவனொருவன் செய்ததுகா ணென்றேனா
அன்னை யலறிப் படர்தரத் தன்னையான்
உண்ணுநீர் விக்கினா ணென்றேனா அன்னையும்
தன்னைப் புறம்பழித்து நீவமற் றென்னைக்
கடைக்கணற் கொல்வான்போல் நோக்கி நகைக்கூட்டஞ்
செய்தானக் கள்வன் மகன்

kalittokai 115; a kalivenṇā:

This poem is a **kalivenṇā** of a different type. There is a **taravu**, **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu**, a line with five metrical feet (**aiñcīr aṭi**), and refrain.

தோழிநாங் காணாமை யுண்ட கடுங்கள்னை மெய்கூர (five feet)
நாணாது சென்று நடுங்க வுரைத்தாங்குக்
கரந்ததூஉம் கையொடு கோட்பட்டாங் கண்டாய்நம்
புல்லினத் தாய மகன்குடி வந்ததோர்
முல்லையொரு காழுங் கண்ணியும் மெல்லியால்
கூந்தலுட் பெய்து முடித்தேன்மன் தோழியாய்
வெண்ணெய் உரைஇ விரித்த கதுப்போடே

அன்னையும் அத்தனும் இல்லரா யாய்நாண்
அன்னமுன் வீழ்ந்தன்றப் பு

This is the **taravu**, an introduction.

அதனை வினவலுஞ் செய்யாள் சினவலுஞ் செய்யாள்
நெருப்புக்கை தொட்டவர் போல விதிர்ந்திட்டு
நீங்கிப் புறங்கடைப் போயினாள் யானுமென்
சாந்துளர் கூழை முடியா நிலந்தாழ்ந்த
பூங்கரை நீலந் தழீஇத் தளர்பொல்கிப்
பாங்கருங் காணத் தொளித்தேன் அதற்கெல்லா
ஈங்கெவன் அஞ்ச வது

This is **iṭai-nilai-p-pāṭṭu**, which is like a **tālicaī**, but does not have a subdued tone, and neither does it repeat its focus on one theme. Note that there is a refrain (அதனை) in the beginning.

அஞ்சல் அவன்கண்ணி நீபுனைந்தா யாயின் நமரும்
அவன்கண் அடைஞ்ஞந்தார் நின்னை அகன்கண்
வரைப்பின் மணல்தாழப் பெய்து திரைப்பில்
வதுவையும் ஈங்கே அயர்ப் அதுவேயாம்
அல்கலுஞ் சூழ்ந்த வினை

This is **curitakam** ending the poem in the **veṇṇā** meter. Note that there is a refrain (அஞ்சல்) in the beginning.

kalittokai 62; a **koccakakkali**:

This **koccaka-k-kali** has **neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu**, **kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu**, **koccakam**, and **curitakam** as its components.

ஏன இஃதொத்தன் நாணிலன் தன்னொடு
மேவேமென் பாரையும் மேவினன் கைப்பற்றும்
மேவினும் மேவாக் கடையும் அஃதெல்லாம்
நீயறிதி யானஃ தறிகல்லேன் புவமன்ற

மெல்லிணர் செல்லாக் கொடியன்னாய் நிண்ணையான்
 புல்லினி தாகலிற் புல்லினென் எல்லா
 தமக்கினி தென்று வலிதிற் பிறர்க்கினி
 செய்வது நன்றமோ மற்று

This is a **neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu**, long song in less than twelve lines employing the **veṇpā** meter.

சுடர்த்தொடீ போற்றாய் களேதின் முதுக்குறைமை போற்றிக்கேள்
 வேட்டார்க் கினிதாயி னல்லது நீர்க்கினிதென்
 றுண்பவோ நீருண் பவர்

This is a **kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu**, short song employing the **veṇpā** meter. Note that the first line of this **kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu** has five metrical feet (**aiñcīraṭi**).

செய்வ தறிகல்லேன் யாதுசெய் வேன்கொலோ
 ஐவா யரவி னிடைப்பட்டு கைவாரா
 மையின் மதியின் விளங்கு முகத்தாரை
 வெளவிக் கொளலும் அறனைனக் கண்டன்று
 This is **koccakam**.

அறனு மதுகண்டற் றுயின் திறகின்றிக்
 கூறுஞ்சொற் கேளான் நலிதரும் பண்டுநாம்
 வேறல்ல மென்பதொன் றுண்டால் அவனொடு
 மாறுண்டோ நெஞ்சே நமக்கு

This is **curitakam** ending the poem in the **veṇpā** meter.

kalittokai 60; a **uralkali** (dialogue):

சுணங்கணி வனமுலைச் சுடர்கொண்ட நறுநுதல்
 மணங்கமழ் நறுங்கோதை மாரிவீ ழிருங்கூந்தல்
 நுணங்கெழில் ஒண்துத்தி நுழைநொசி மடமருங்குல்
 வணங்கிறை வரிமுன்கை வரியார்ந்த அல்குலாய்
 This is **taravu**.

கண்ணூர்ந்த நலத்தாரைக் கதுமெனக் கண்டவர்க்
 குண்ணின்ற நோய்மிக உயிரெஞ்ச துயர்செய்தல்
 பெண்ணன்று புனையிழாய் எனக்கூறித் தொழுஉந் தொழுதே
 கண்ணூநீ ராக நடுங்கினன் இந்நகாய்
 என்செய்தான் கொல்லோ இஃதொத்தன் தன்கண்
 பொருகளி றன்ன தகைசாம்பி யுள்ளுள்
 உருகுவான் போலும் உடைந்து
 This is a **neṭu veṇ pāṭṭu**.

தெருவின்கண் காரண மின்றிக் கலங்குவார்க் கண்டுநீ
 வாரண வாசிப் பதம்பெயர்த்தல் ஏதில
 நீநின்மேற் கொள்வ தெவன்
 This is a **kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu**.

அலர்முலை யாயிழை நல்லாய் கதுமெனப்
 பேரம ருண்கணின் தோழி உறீஇய
 ஆரஞ் ரெவ்வம் உயிர்வாங்கும்
 மற்றிந்நோய் தீரும் மருந்தருளாய் ஒண்டொட
 This is **koccakam**.

நின்முகங் காணும் மருந்தினேன் என்னுமால்
 நின்முகந் தான்பெறி னல்லது கொன்னே
 மருந்து பிறிதியாதும் இல்லேன் திருந்திழாய்
 என்செய்வாங் கொல்இனி நாம்
 This is a **veṇpā**.

பொன்செய்வாம்
 This is a **tani-c-col**.

ஆறு விலங்கித் தெருவின்கண் நின்னெருவன்
 கூறுஞ்சொல் வாயெனக் கொண்டதன் பண்புணராந்

தேறல் எளிதென்பாம் நாம்

This is a **kuṟu veṇ pāṭṭu**.

ஒருவன் சாமா நெளிதென்பாம் மற்று

This is a line with five metrical feet. It does not have the nature of a **pōkku**, which would have stated the intent and made the poem reach an end without saying anything more.

சிறிதாங்கே மாணவ ரம்பல் அலரின் அலர்கென

நாணும் நிறையும் நயப்பில் பிறப்பிலி

பூணகம் நோக்கி இமையான் நயந்துநங்

கேண்மை விருப்புற் றவனை யெதிர்நின்று

நாண்டப் பெயர்த்த நயவர வின்றே

This is **curitakam** ending the poem in the **ācīriyam** meter. Note that the penultimate line has four feet, so the **ācīriyam** meter of this **curitakam** is called **nilai maṇṭila ācīriyam**.

LENGTHENING OF SOUNDS (**aḷapeṭai**) AND VOWEL CLUSTERS¹

GENERAL: There is a twofold approach to the understanding of what has so far been referred to as “**aḷapeṭai**” in the literature — one laid out by the authors of Tamil grammatical texts and the other followed by the commentators.² What authors of grammatical texts refer to as an

¹ This chapter presupposes an understanding of the basic metrical unit **acai**, metrical feet **cīr**, and metrical binding **taḷai**. See “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry” where these items are discussed.

² For a different discussion on **aḷapeṭai** in traditional Tamil grammars and related works, see Sp. Thinnappan (1976:539-560). In this informative article, the author concludes that “**aḷapeṭai** according to the meaning of the term itself is a prosodical feature; it functions as a free variant with a long vowel form. It occurs only for the purpose of filling metrical exigency. Historically, the view of taking **aḷapeṭai** as a disyllabic one is earlier than the view of taking it as a monosyllabic one. The later view is introduced because of the influence of Sanskrit **pluta** and of the loss of vowel cluster in the language” (Sp. Thinnappan, 1976:557).

aḷapeṭai ‘elongation’ process has been categorized as **iyarkai aḷapeṭai** and **ceyyuḷ-icai-nirai-aḷapeṭai** by some commentators.³ Two other types, namely **in-icai-aḷapeṭai** and **col-icai-aḷapeṭai**, discussed by other commentators, are construed as mere vowel clusters by the authors of grammatical texts.⁴ These various items are discussed below.

In Tamil grammatical tradition, vowels and consonants are considered to have intrinsic length. One unit measure of length (**māttirai**) is equal to a snap of the fingers or a wink of the eyes.⁵ Consonants measure one-half unit in length, while short and long vowels measure one and two units respectively. According to traditional Tamil grammars, when a long vowel or a consonant is elongated beyond its intrinsic length for the sake of fulfilling some metrical requirement in poetry or to derive an onomatopoeic expression or a vocative form, the process is called **aḷapeṭai** “increase in the unit measure” or ‘raising the quantity/duration.’⁶ The elongation is beyond two unit measures of length for a vowel, and to any level of elongation beyond its intrinsic length for a consonant. It enables one to understand the differences among various meters.⁷ The elongated item functions as a variant of a long vowel or a consonant. Thus, **aḷapeṭai** as construed by the authors of Tamil grammars is basically a phenomenon of elongation of a single long vowel or a consonant. Any of the seven long

³ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, commentary on Rule 6.

⁴ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rues 226, 258, 261, 267, 277, and 292. The Extensive Commentary (“virutti urai”) on Naṇṇūl, Rule 91.

⁵ Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rule 7.

⁶ Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rules 6, 33, and 40; Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, 125. Metrical requirement is explained below. See “Elongation for the Sake of Metrical Requirement.”

⁷ Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, ceyyuḷiyal, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rule 2. See note 22 below.

vowels (**ā**, **ī**, **ū**, **ē**, **ai**, **ō**, and **au**) can participate in the elongation process, whereas only certain consonants (**ñ**, **ṇ**, **ṇ**, **n**, **m**, **ṇ**, **y**, **v**, **l**, and **ḷ**) and the **āytam** (**ḥ**) can be elongated.⁸

Normally, the lengthening of vowels and consonants also occurs for grammatical purposes, but the lengthening in those cases is not construed in grammatical texts as an elongation (**aḷapeṭai**) process *per se*. For example, the lengthening of a short vowel into a long vowel in instances like that of deriving a verbal noun from a verb stem is never construed as an **aḷapeṭai**: e.g., **pāṭu** ‘suffering’ (verbal noun) from **paṭu** ‘to suffer’ (verb stem). Similarly, the long **ī** in the word **ottī** ‘you resemble ... ; you are like ...’ (*puṛa.56:11, 12, 13, 14*), which is a variant of short **i** (cf. *otti pari.19:99, 100*), is not considered as an **aḷapeṭai**. And the doubling of the stem-final consonants in forms like **īṭallē** < **īṭal** ‘giving’ + **ē** particle (*puṛa.123:2*) and **ōmpallē** < **ompal** ‘warding off’ + **ē** particle (*kuṛu.294:8*) is not acknowledged as an **aḷapeṭai** process. In such instances where the stem has a long vowel (**ī** in **īṭal** and **ō** in **ōmpal**) and therefore does not morphophonemically trigger the doubling of the stem-final, the doubling of the stem-final is, in fact, due to metrical exigency but not called an **aḷapeṭai** process. Thus, it is confirmed that a true **aḷapeṭai** is the elongation of a long vowel (**neṭil**) or the elongation of a vowelless consonant (**orru**).

When orthographically representing the elongation process, the elongated vowel is followed by its shorter counterpart once or twice. The long vowel **ā** has **a** as its shorter counterpart, similarly, **ī** has **i**, **ū** has **u**, **ē** has **e**, **ai** has **i**, **ō** has **o**, and **au** has **u** as respective shorter counterparts. No glide is inserted between the two juxtaposed vowels formed in this manner: **āa**, **īi**, **ūu**, **ēe**, **aii**, **ōo**, and **auu**. In the case of an elongated consonant/**āytam**, the consonant/**āytam** is repeated once to indicate the elongation: **ññ**, **ṇṇ**, **nn**, **mm**, **ṇṇ**, **yy**, **ll**, **vv**, **ll**, and **ḥḥ**.

⁸ Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rules 41 and 42. Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, ceyyuliyal, Nacciṇārkkīṇiyam, Rule 18.

When commentators on Tamil grammars discuss “**aḷapeṭai**,” they invariably refer to the juxtaposed vowels or juxtaposed like-consonants within a word. Alternatively stated, the juxtaposition of a long vowel next to its corresponding short vowel and the repetition of the same consonant within a word have been treated as “**aḷapeṭai**” in the Tamil commentatorial tradition: **āa**, **īi**, **ūu**, **ēe**, **aīi**, **ōo**, **auu**, **ṇṇ**, **ññ**, **ṇṇ**, **nn**, **mm**, **ṇṇ**, **yy**, **ll**, **v v**, **ll**, and **ḥḥ**. Unlike the authors of grammatical texts, some commentators give different names to what they see as different types of the **aḷapeṭai** process concerning the vowels. In their commentaries, the vocalic **aḷapeṭai** is called the **uyir-aḷapeṭai** and the consonantal **aḷapeṭai** gets the name **orru-aḷapeṭai**. Then, four types of vocalic **aḷapeṭai** and one type of consonantal **aḷapeṭai** are discussed. The four types of vocalic **aḷapeṭai** are **iyarkai aḷapeṭai**, **ceyyuḷ-icai-nirai-aḷapeṭai**, **in-icai-aḷapeṭai**, and **col-icai-aḷapeṭai**.⁹ The **iyarkai aḷapeṭai** refers to words which contain vowel clusters and do not have alternates without the cluster: e.g., **makaṭūu** ‘woman’ (*ciru*:192). The second type, **ceyyuḷ-icai-nirai-aḷapeṭai** or just **icai-nirai-aḷapeṭai**, refers to words in which a long vowel is elongated further for metrical fulfillment, and these words do have alternates without the elongated vowel: e.g., **kaṭāam** ‘rut of an elephant’ (*narr*.18:8) vs. **kaṭām** (*kali*.48:5); **elāam** ‘all’ (*kali*.65:26) vs. **elām** (*kali*.83:22); **tāalnta** ‘low’ (*kali*.114:1) vs. **tālnta** (*kali*.96:3). The third type, **in-icai-aḷapeṭai**, refers to words in which a short vowel is lengthened first to its corresponding long vowel and the resulting long vowel is elongated further without any metrical exigency. This supposedly happens to create a melodic sound and therefore is called **in-icai-aḷapeṭai** ‘**aḷapeṭai** of sweet/pleasant melody’: e.g., **eṭuppatūum** (< **eṭuppatu** ‘that which raises/nurtures’ + **um** ‘and’). According to the commentators, here the last vowel **u** in **eṭuppatu** is first lengthened to **ū** and elongated further triggering the vowel cluster **ūu**. The last type, **col-icai-aḷapeṭai**, refers to words which change their fundamental

⁹ Cf. The Extensive Commentary (“*virutti urai*”) on Naṅṇūl, Rule 91, pp.56-57.

shape and in some cases have grammatical significance: e.g., **kurīi** ‘sparrow’ (*kuṛu.46:2*) vs. **kuruvi** (*pari.18:47*); **marīi** ‘to get accustomed to’ (*peru:383*) vs. **maruvi** (*matu:541*); **nacaii** ‘desiring, having desired’ (*cīru:38*) vs. **nacai** ‘desire’ (*poru:2*). The last example is supposed to illustrate the grammatical significance of the elongation. According to the commentators, the verb form **nacaii** ‘desiring, having desired’ is derived from the noun **nacai** ‘desire’, so they claim that by the elongation from **ai** to **aii**, the noun is changed into a verb.¹⁰

With this background information, we can proceed to see how the so-called “**aḷapeṭai**” is actually employed in classical Tamil poetry.

Elongation for the Sake of Metrical Requirement

Vowels and consonants in classical Tamil are elongated mostly for the sake of meter, a phenomenon referred to as “metrical requirement” in this study. Each line (**aṭi**) in a classical Tamil poem is supposed to contain particular patterns of **acai** and metrical feet (**cīr**) so as to bring certain metrical structure to the line. But, when words fall short of particular patterns of **acai** that are needed for the required patterns of feet, a vowel or a consonant in those words is elongated beyond its intrinsic length; the additional length is represented orthographically by a vowel or a consonant, depending upon which one is elongated. The vowel or consonant representing the additional length thereby participates in the formation of a new **acai** pattern and qualifies the word to meet the particular pattern of **cīr** required in the line.

For example, the word **ñaman** ‘pointer of a scale’, has the pattern of a **nirai acai**. It cannot by itself make up a metrical foot in certain contexts: e.g., *terikōl ñaman pōla* ‘like the **pointer** of a judging-scale.’

¹⁰ This study considers the form **nacaii** as derived from the verb stem **nacai**. See “Vowel Clusters in Classical Tamil” in this chapter for a similar example.

Therefore, the word-final consonant **n** is elongated to be used in a poem: *terikōl ñamann pōla* (*pura.6:9*). The second consonant **n** in the elongated version **ñamann** is separated from the first **n** for metrical analysis and achieves the status of a **nēr acai**. Thus, the new form **ñamann** is scanned as **nirai-nēr** (**ñaman-n**) and qualifies as a proper foot (**cīr**) in the line under question. It fulfills the metrical requirement and the elongation here is a true **aḷapeṭai**. More examples which include the elongation of vowels are treated below.¹¹

Elongation Provides Different Metrical and Grammatical Possibilities

Consider the following forms meaning ‘children’: **cīrār** (சிறர்), **cīrāar** (சிறாஅர்), and **cīruvar** (சிறுவர்). All of them are derived from **cīru** ‘young, small’ + **ar** PNG. The first form **cīrār** does demonstrate a lengthening from **a** to **ā** when **cīru** and **ar** are combined, but this lengthening is not an **aḷapeṭai per se**. On the other hand, the second form, **cīrāar**, illustrates the elongation of **ā** to **āa**, which is a true **aḷapeṭai**. The third one, **cīrāaar** illustrates a further elongation from **āa** to **āaa**, which is also a true **aḷapeṭai**. The last, **cīruvar**, illustrates no lengthening or elongation, but the insertion of a glide (**v**) between the stem **cīru** and the suffix **ar**.

Each of these forms has a specific metrical pattern and therefore a different metrical possibility: **cīrār** is a single **nirai acai**, but the final consonant (**r**) can be joined with another item to become a part of another **acai**; **cīrāar** can function as a single **nirai acai** or as a foot made up of two **acai**, **nirai-nēr** (**cīrā-ar**); **cīrāaar** is **nirai-nirai** (**cīrā-aar**) or could function as **nirai-nēr** (**cīrāa-ar**); **cīruvar** is **nirai-nēr** (**cīru-var**). The

¹¹ See “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry” for a discussion of the metrical significance of letters (**eḷuttu**) and specifically for an explanation of how elongated vowels and consonants are scanned.

way they are scanned depends on the line in which they occur. In classical Tamil, they occur in the following contexts:

titiyīṇ **cīṛārum** vitiyīṇ makkaḷum (*pari.3:6*)
 karuṅkai viṇaiṇār kātalaṇ **cīṛāar** (*peru.223*)
cīṛāaar tuṭiyar pātuval makāaar (*puṛa.291:1*)
 paintoṭi makaḷirotu **cīruvarp** payantu (*naṛṛ.330:9*)

In the first instance, the final consonant in **cīṛār** is followed by **um** and therefore **cīṛārum** ‘and the children’ becomes a metrical foot (**cīr**) of the pattern *nirai-nēr* (**cīṛā-rum**). In the second instance, **cīṛāar** ‘children’ qualifies as a foot by itself and is of the pattern *nirai-nēr* (**cīṛā-ar**). The third form, **cīṛāaar** ‘O children!’ is of the pattern *nirai-nirai* (**cīṛā-aar**). Note that here the elongation for the second time (**āa** to **āaa**) turns the noun **cīṛāar** into the vocative **cīṛāaar**. Without the second elongation, the word could be construed as a plain noun, not necessarily a vocative. Consequently, the whole line **cīṛāar** tuṭiyar pātuval makāaar could be misunderstood as a list of nouns (‘children, drummers, and skillful young singers’), rather than a series of address forms (‘Children! Drummers! Skillful Young Singers!’) — hence, the elongation: **cīṛāaar** tuṭiyar pātuval makāaar (*puṛa.291:1*).¹²

¹² Another pair of forms, as an example of different metrical patterns: **celliya** (*aiṅk.378:1*) and **celīiya** (*naṛṛ.19:7*), which mean the same, ‘to leave’, are derived from **cel** ‘go’ + **iya** infinitive suffix. Note that **celliya** is *nēr-nirai* (**cel-liya**) whereas **celīiya** could function as *nirai-nirai* (**celi-iya**) or *nirai-nēr* (**celi-ya**) depending on what follows in a poem.

Examples of forms in which the elongation has grammatical significance: **akap-paṭēen** ‘I will not cause ... to be caught’ < **akappaṭu** + **ēn** PNG (*puṛa.72:9*); **uṭṭi** ‘making ... wear’ < **uṭu** ‘to wear’ + **i** past/completive marker (*peru.470*).

Vowel Clusters in Classical Tamil

Consider the form **vaḷaii** ‘having bent; bending ...’ (*ciṟu:30*) which is derived from **vaḷai** ‘to bend’ + **i** past/completive marker. The cluster **aii** here does not reflect the elongation of **ai** to **aii**. Similarly, **iraiiya** ‘to beg’ (*pati.52:11*), derived from **ira** ‘beg’ + **iya** (infinitive suffix) does not reflect the elongation of a long vowel. In this case, the stem-final short vowel **a** changes to **ai** (or “lengthened” to become **ai**) and the suffix **iya** is simply added to it. The long vowel **ai** in **iraiiya** cannot be considered as a variant of short **a**, nor can the short **i** in the suffix **iya** be considered as symbolizing the elongation of **ai**. Therefore, the process here is not a true elongation. These are examples of mere vowel clusters.¹³

Elongation vs. Clusters

As has been demonstrated above, both true elongation of long vowels (= **uyir aḷapeṭai**) and vowel clusters are represented in orthography as “juxtaposed” vowels in classical Tamil. There is no such confusion between elongated consonants (= **orru aḷapeṭai**) and clusters of like consonants, because elongated consonants (e.g., **ṇṇ**) and like-consonant clusters (e.g., **ṇṇ**) are the same. They both indicate a true **aḷapeṭai** process. Unlike-consonant clusters (e.g., **ym**) occur as a result of joining stems and affixes. This kind of consonant cluster (**ym**) is never mistaken for an elongated consonant or consonantal **aḷapeṭai**. Therefore, for the practical purposes of this study, it would be most fruitful to orient discussion from the perspective of juxtaposed vowels and juxtaposed consonants in a word, bearing in mind that certain juxtaposed vowels do not always

¹³ However, some commentators on Tamil grammars would call forms like **vaḷaii** a **col-icai-aḷapeṭai**.

stand for the elongation of a single long vowel.¹⁴ It is also worth noting that the second letter in the juxtaposed items (e.g., **a** and **ṇ** in **āa** and **ṇṇ**) is not always separated from the preceding letter during metrical analysis.¹⁵

Occurrence of Juxtaposed Items

Juxtaposed vowels are found anywhere within a word: in the initial, medial, or final position. The clustering is used to fulfill some metrical requirement or occurs as a morphophonemic or grammatical phenomenon. The former was discussed above. As a morphophonemic or grammatical phenomenon, the cluster arises from processes like suffixation or derivation of vocatives and other nominal forms. When the stem-final vowel and the initial vowel or consonant of the following item are harmonized, a vowel cluster emerges (e.g., **āa**, **aii**) between the stem and the following item and what appears as a long vowel on the surface level may, in fact, have resulted from a different vowel in the underlying level.¹⁶ Fulfilling the

¹⁴ Specifically, vowel clusters (**īi** and **aii**) arising from adding the past marker **i** to certain stems do not represent the true elongation of **ī** or **ai**. Examples are given below.

¹⁵ See note 11. Commentators note that when the juxtaposed items, which they call “**aḷapeṭai**,” arise as a result of conjoining (**puṇarcci**) or for implying some special meaning (**poruḷ pulappāṭṭirku**), the second item in the cluster is not separated from its preceding letter during metrical analysis: cf. Tolkāppiyam, *poruḷatikāram*, *Pēraciriyam*, commentary on *ceyyuḷiyal*, Rule 328; Tolkāppiyam, *poruḷatikāram*, Nacc:21, cey.17.

Unfortunately, the examples provided by the commentators are not from classical Tamil poetry, except in one instance (*malai:352*) which is discussed in this chapter as well as in “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry.” What actually seems to be happening in classical Tamil is that only rarely the second letter (**eḷuttu**) in juxtaposed items has to be discounted during metrical analysis. The examples given below include such instances (e.g., **taḷūu**, **ēey**). One must also remember that such a phenomenon, where the second item is discounted, is contextual.

¹⁶ An example, *ira* ‘beg’ + *iya* (infinitive suffix) > *iraiiya* ‘to beg’ (*pati.52:11*), was discussed above in “Vowel Clusters in Classical Tamil.”

metrical requirement is concomitant of such clustering and the second vowel in the cluster is not metrically significant in some instances.¹⁷ Examples are given below.

Juxtaposition of like consonants (e.g., **ṇṇ**, **ṇṇ**), which in fact indicates a true elongation, occurs only in word-medial or word-final position to fulfill some metrical requirement or produce onomatopoeic words. The second item in the cluster does not always have metrical significance. Examples are given below.

From another perspective, it can be said that juxtaposed vowels which appear in the first syllable of a stem do so purely for the sake of meter, whereas juxtaposed consonants which appear in the first syllable of a stem may or may not do so for the sake of meter. In other syllables, the juxtaposed items might reflect either the true elongation of a single item or a result of joining two items (e.g., **iraiiya**).

EXAMPLES

<i>Juxtaposed Items</i>	<i>Structure and Example</i>
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āa:	This juxtaposition occurs in three circumstances: (i) when the long vowel ā is elongated in a monosyllabic stem or in the second syllable of a disyllabic stem with open syllables; (ii) when the suffix um or a suffix beginning with a , ā , or y is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables; (iii) when a word is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables to result in a doublet or a noun-noun type of compound. ¹⁸
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¹⁷ See note 15.
¹⁸ See "Notes on Miscellaneous Items" for a discussion of doublets.

(pronoun; metrical requirement)

cērvā rātalīṇ yāa mirappavai (pari.5:78)

‘... what we beg for’

[yāam < yām ‘we.’ Here the long vowel ā in the stem is elongated. It is a true aḷapeṭai. Without the elongation of ā to āa, the word would be yām, a nēr acai which cannot by itself make up a metrical foot (cīr) in this context. The elongation of ā makes yā-a to be construed as a foot of the pattern nēr-nēr, which produces the metrical binding called iyaṛcīr veṇ taḷai when combined with the following foot.]

(vocative; metrical requirement)

varuvarkol vayaṅkilāay valippalyāṇ kēeḷiṇi (kali.11:5)

‘Now listen, lady wearing bright ornaments,

I assure you. He will arrive.’

[vayaṅkilāay ‘O lady wearing bright ornaments’

< vayaṅkilāy < vayaṅku ‘to be bright’ + ilai ‘ornaments’

First, the ai in ilai is changed to āy resulting in the vocative form vayaṅkilāy. Then the ā is elongated for the sake of meter. It is a true aḷapeṭai. Without the elongation, vayaṅkilāy would be nirai-nirai (vayaṅ-kilāy). With the elongation, vayaṅkilāay is nirai-nirai-nēr (vayaṅ-kilā-ay) and nicely produces the metrical binding called kalittaḷai with the following foot.]

(adjectival participle; suffixation; metrical requirement)

īṅkai ... tiraḷvī ... aṛaimicait tāam ... (narr.79:1, 3)

‘where the shapely īṅkai flowers spread on the rocks’

[tāam < tā ‘to spread, scatter’ + um adjectival participle suffix. The stem-final vowel is elongated after deleting the u in the suffix. It is a true aḷapeṭai. Without the elongation, tām would not qualify as a

foot. **tā-am** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the preceding foot.]

(adverbial participle; suffixation; metrical requirement)

menḥāyalōr ... veṇiyāṭu makalīroṭu ceṇiyat **tāayk** (*paṭṭ:150, 155*)

‘gentle lovely women, **spreading around** in order

to join closely with the women dancing in frenzy’

[**tāay** < **tā** ‘to spread’ + **y** adverbial participle suffix. See the explanation given above for **yāam**. Here the long vowel **ā** in the stem **tā** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **tā-ay** is **ner-nēr**. It produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the preceding foot.]

(verbal noun; suffixation; metrical requirement)

kalīrukaṇ ṭalūum **aḷāal** maṇanta ... ciṇāar (*pura.46:5*)

‘children who forgot their weeping **cry**

when they looked at the elephant’

[**aḷāal** < **aḷu** ‘to cry’ + **al** verbal noun suffix. Here, the short vowel **a** in the suffix is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Without the elongation, **aḷāl** would be a single **nirai acai**. But **aḷā-al** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]

(negative imperative/optative; suffixation;
metrical requirement)

aṛāa liyarō avaruṭaik kēṇmai (*aka.40:10*)

‘**May** his friendship **not be severed**.’

[**aṛāaliyarō** ‘may it not be severed’ < **aṛu** ‘to sever, cut off’ + **al** negative marker + **iyarō** imperative/optative suffix. Note that the short vowel **a** in the suffix is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **aṛā-a** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]

(negative imperative/optative; suffixation;
metrical requirement)

muyaṅkal **viṭāal** ivai (aka.26:9)

‘Do not let them go without embracing (me).’

[**viṭāal** ‘do not let go’ < **viṭu** ‘to let go’ + **al** negative marker; imperative/optative suffix. Note that the short vowel **a** in the suffix is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **viṭā-al** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyaṅcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]

(negative participial noun; suffixation; metrical requirement)

uṭāa pōrā ākutaḷ aṟintum paṭāam maññaikku ṭitta em kō
(pura.141:10-11)

‘our king who gave a shawl to the peacock although he knew that it is (a bird) which would not wrap and cover itself (with the shawl).’

[**uṭāa** < **uṭu** ‘to wrap around’ + **ā** PNG. Here, the suffix **ā** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **uṭā-a** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. Note that the long **ā** in the next word **pōrā** is not elongated, because the latter already is **nēr-nēr** (**pō-rā**) and qualifies as a foot.]

(compound derivation; metrical requirement)

miṭāac conri (kuri:201)

‘cooked rice in the big pot’

[**miṭāac conri** < **miṭā** ‘large/big pot’ + **conri** ‘cooked rice.’ Here, **miṭā** by itself cannot qualify as a foot and so the long **ā** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **miṭā-a** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

(doublet; metrical requirement)

cāṇṛāla rīṇṛa **takāat** takāamakāaṇ (*pari.8:57*)

‘Unscrupulous man, born to noble ones.’

[**takāat** takāa ‘unscrupulous’ < **takā** + **takā**; **takāattakāa** is a doublet.

takā is negative adjectival participle of **taku** ‘to be proper’;

Here, **takā** by itself cannot qualify as a foot and so the stem-final ā is elongated to āa. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **takā-at** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]

īi:

This juxtaposition occurs in two circumstances: (i) when the long vowel **ī** is elongated in the first syllable of the stem or elsewhere as in a vocative; (ii) when a suffix beginning with **i** is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables.

(nominal form; metrical requirement)

nīir inṁaiyiṇ (*puṛa.355:2*)

[**nīr** ‘water’]

‘since there is no water’

(See the explanation given above for **yāam**. **nī-ir** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onṛu āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**.)

(verb form; metrical requirement)

celvar ... irappōrk **kīi** yāmaiṇ [celvar irappōrkku īyāmaiṇ] (*puṛa.165:3-4*)

‘since the rich people do **not** give to the suppliants’

[**īiyāmai** < **ī** ‘to give’ + **y** (glide) + **ā** negative marker + **mai** verbal noun suffix. The stem **ī** does not qualify as a **cīr**, whereas **ī-i** is a **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onṛu āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. The elongation **īi** is a true **aḷapeṭai**.]

(verb form; metrical requirement)

cakaṭam ... **vīin tāṅku** (*kuṛu.165:3-4*)

‘like the cart fell apart’,¹⁹

[**vīintāṅku** < **vī** ‘to fall apart’ + **nt** completive/past marker + **āṅku** particle ‘thus.’ The form **vīn** would not qualify as a foot, whereas **vī-in** is **nēr-nēr**. It produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. The elongation **īi** is a true **aḷapeṭai**.]

(vocative form; metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

cuṭarttoṭī kēḷāy (*kali.51:15*)

‘O woman wearing shining bracelets, listen.’

[**cuṭarttoṭi** ‘shining bracelets’ < **cuṭar** ‘to shine like flame’ + **toṭi** ‘bracelets.’ The form **cuṭarttoṭi** refers to a woman by metonymy. The final vowel **i** is elongated turning the noun into a vocative. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Here, **cuṭart-toṭī-i** is of the pattern **nirai-nirai-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

(adjectival participle; suffixation; metrical requirement)

kaṭitiṭi **verīiya** kamañcūl veṅkuruku (*aka.141:19*)

‘the pregnant white crane **which was scared** of the sudden thunder’

[**verīiya** < **veru** ‘to be scared of’ + **i** completive/past marker + **y** (glide) + **a** adjectival participle suffix. Note that **īi** has resulted from the past marker **i**. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Without the elongation, **veri-ya** would be **nirai-nēr** and produce a **veṇ taḷai** with the following foot. With the elongation, **verī-ya** is **nirai-nirai** and produces **nirai onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

¹⁹ The form **vīintāṅku** is found in the poem edited by Vaiyapuri Pillai.

(adverbial participle; suffixation;
metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

kaṇiccipōṛ kōṭucīi (kali.101:8)

‘**sharpening** the (bull’s) horns like a trident’

[cīi < cī ‘to whittle, sharpen’ + i completive/past marker. Note that īi has resulted from adding the past marker i to the stem cī. It is not a true aḷapeṭai, because it does not reflect the elongation of ī. The īi here is a mere vowel cluster.]

ūu:

This juxtaposition occurs in three circumstances: (i) when the long vowel ū is elongated in the first syllable of the stem; (ii) when a suffix beginning with u or ū or a suffix beginning with a consonant is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables; (iii) when a word is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables to result in a noun-noun type of compound.

(adverbial participle; suffixation; metrical requirement)

vammeṇak kūuy (poru:101)

‘**calling out** saying “Come!”’

[kūuy < kū ‘to call out’ + y completive/past marker. The stem-final ū is elongated. It is a true aḷapeṭai. kū-uy is nēr-nēr and produces iyaṛcīr veṇ taḷai with the preceding foot. Compare the non-elongated form kūy in kali.38:8.]

(verb stem; metrical requirement)

cemmai pūuṇ ṭaṇvāḷtta [cemmai pūṇṭu aṇṇ vāḷtta] (pati.90:11-12)

‘**assuming / taking up** forthrightness, and blessed by Righteousness’
[To be accurate, two lines from the poem have to be considered:

true **aḷapeṭai**. **teḷū-uka** is **nirai-nirai** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the preceding foot.]

(infinitive; suffixation; no metrical significance)

vārik kural**piliyūu**

(aka.8:15-16)

‘combing and **wringing** your tresses’

[**piliyūu** ‘wringing’ < **pili** ‘to twist/wring’ + **y** glide + **ūu** infinitive suffix. The short vowel **u** in the cluster **ūu** does not have a separate metrical status. It is not a true **aḷapeṭai**. **kural-pili-yūu** is of the pattern **nirai-nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the preceding foot.]

(verbal noun; suffixation; no metrical significance)

tuṇaṅkaiyañcīrt **taḷūumarappa** [tuṇaṅkai am cīr t taḷūu maṇappa]

(matu:160)

‘as (the women) forget the **embracing** dance of the rhythmic tuṇaṅkai’

[**taḷūu** ‘embracing’ < **taḷu** ‘to embrace’ + **u** verbal noun suffix.

Note that the suffix here is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **taḷūumarap-pa** is a foot of the pattern **nirai-nirai-nēr**.]²²

(*puṛa*.72:9) is causative/effective. Thus, there is evidence to claim that the elongation of a vowel happened in this period for grammatical purposes also.

P.S. Subrahmanyam (1971:10) notes the **ī** in forms like **uṭṭī** ‘to make X wear’ (**uṭu** ‘to wear’ + **i** adverbial participle marker) as a “causative-producer.”

²² Here, the line tuṇaṅkaiyañcīrt **taḷūumarappa** is called a **vañci aṭi**. Therefore, no metrical binding (**taḷai**) needs to be considered according to the earlier conventions of prosody. If the line was used in a different poem as an **āciriya aṭi**, the form **taḷū-u** could have functioned as a **cīr**: tuṇaṅkai yañcīrt **taḷūu** maṇappa. Then, the short **u** in **taḷūu** which symbolizes the elongation would be metrically significant, and the foot **taḷūu** would be **nirai-nēr** and produce **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot. This line can be used as an example to show that the meter **vañci** is similar to **āciriya**.

(compound; no metrical significance)

kurūukka ṇīraṭip pommāl peṇukuvir (malai:170)

‘You will get heaps of cooked millet which looks like **glossy eyes**.’

[**kurūukkaṇ** ‘glossy eyes’ < **kuru** ‘glaze, luster’ + **kaṇ** ‘eyes’; The stem-final **u** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **kurūuk-ka** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot. Compare **kurukkaṇ** in *kali.101:15* where there is no elongation.]²³

ēe:

This juxtaposition occurs in three circumstances: (i) when the long vowel **ē** is elongated in the first syllable of the stem; (ii) when a suffix beginning with **ē** or **y** is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables; (iii) when a word is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables to result in a noun-noun type of compound.

(nominal form; metrical requirement)

tēer parantapulam (pati.26:1)

‘land where **chariots** have spread’

[**tēer** < **tēr** ‘chariot(s)’. See the explanation given above in the case of **yāam**.]

(vocative; metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

ēe yōo veṇaviḷi yēṇpikka (pari.19:61)

‘as (she) called out “**Hey**” and “Oh” ...’

²³ Actually, some traditional commentators recognize this kind of clustering without referring to it as an **aḷapeṭai** for the purpose of lengthening. Cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentaries on Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Rule 261, and Tolkāppiyam, poruḷatikāram, ceyyūḷiyal, Rule 17, where he refers to it as **puṇarcci vakaiyān eḷuttu-p-pēru ākiya aḷapeṭai** ‘**aḷapeṭai**, which is an added letter, obtained by conjoining.’

[**ēe** < **ē** ‘Hey!’ The long **ē** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **ē-e** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

(verbal noun; grammatical; metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

cēe ruṟṟa ... maṟavar (pati.41:11)

‘warriors who were **gathered**’

[**cēer** ‘joining, gathering’ < **cēr** ‘to gather, join.’ The elongation of **ē** to **ēe** turns the verb **cēr** into a verbal noun. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **cē-e** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

(negative personal verb; suffixation; metrical requirement)

cāra **viṭēen** viṭukkuven āyin (narr.350:5-6)

‘I will **not let** (you) **approach** (me). If I did, ...’

[**viṭēen** < **viṭu** ‘to let happen/go’ + **ēn** PNG. It is also possible to take the form **viṭēen** as a participial noun in this context. In any case, note that the **ē** in the suffix is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. The form **viṭēn** would not qualify as a foot whereas **viṭē-en** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr ven taḷai** with the following foot.]

(adverbial participle; suffixation; no metrical significance)

pūkkō ḷeṇavēeyk kayampuk kaṇaṇē (pura.341:9)

‘He **commanded** “It’s time for wearing flowers” **and** entered the pond (for bathing).’

[**ēey** ‘having commanded; commanded and ...’

< **ē** ‘to command/order’ + **y** past/completive marker

Here, the short **e** symbolizes the elongation of the stem **ē**. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. However, the **e** in **ēe** does not have any separate metrical value. The foot **ḷeṇavēeyk** is **nirai-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr ven taḷai** with the following foot. Compare **ēey** in *pati.11:13* where

the short **e** which symbolizes the elongation of the stem **ē** has metrical significance.]

(compound; no metrical significance)

pēerpakaiyeṇa vonṇenḱō (*puṛa.136:5*)

‘Shall I say that there is hostility such as **lice** in our clothes?’

[**pēerpakai** ‘enmity/hostility from lice’ < **pēṇ** ‘louse’ + **pakai** ‘hostility, enmity.’ The **ē** in the stem is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **pēer**-pakai-yeṇa is **nēr-nirai-nirai** and would be considered as producing **onṛā-vañci-t-taḷai** by the later prosodic convention. **pēerpakaiyeṇa vonṇenḱō** is a **vañci aṭi**. See footnote 22.]

aii:

This juxtaposition occurs in three circumstances: (i) when the long vowel **ai** is elongated in the first syllable of the stem; (ii) when a suffix beginning with **i** is added to a monosyllabic stem or to a disyllabic stem with open syllables; (iii) when a word is added to a monosyllabic stem to result in a noun-noun type of compound.

(vocative; metrical requirement)

irappat tuṇintaṇir kēṇminṇmaṛ raiiya

[irappa t tuṇintaṇir kēṇminṇ maṛru **aiiya**] (*kali.2:10*)

‘**O lord**, you are determined to leave. Listen, however.’

[**aiiya** < **aiya** ‘O lord!’ Without the elongation of **ai**, the form **aiya** could be construed as a single **nirai acai** or as a foot of the pattern **nēr-nēr (ai-ya)**. The elongation certainly makes **aiya** become a foot of the pattern **nēr-nirai** which subsequently produces **veṇḱir veṇ taḷai** with the preceding foot. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**.]

(adjectival participle; suffixation;
metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

iruṅkaḷi **tuḷaiiya** ĩmpuṛa nārai (narr.127:1)
 ‘the crane, with a wet back, **which stirred** the dark backwaters’
 [**tuḷaiiya** ‘that which stirred up’ < **tuḷa** ‘to stir up’ + **i** past/completive
 marker + **y** glide + **a** adjectival participle suffix. Note that the **ai** in
 the cluster **aīi** has resulted from the vowel **a** in the stem and that
 the suffix **i** is added subsequently. It is not a true **aḷapeṭai** because
 it does not reflect the elongation of **ai**. However, **tuḷai-īya** would be
 scanned as **nirai-nirai**, in which case it would produce **iyarcīr veṇ**
taḷai with the following foot. The next line in the poem has a similar
cīr-pattern.]

(adverbial participle; suffixation;
metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

ēṛṛai puṭaittoṭu **puṭaiip** ... palavukkaṇi²⁴
 [ēṛṛai puṭai t toṭupu uṭaii p ... palavu k kaṇi] (kuru.373:5-6)
 ‘slammed on their sides by the male bear, the jack fruits **split open**
 and ...’
 [**uṭaii** ‘splitting open; breaking’ < **uṭai** ‘to break, split open’ + **i**
 adverbial participle suffix. Note that the **ai** in the cluster **aīi** is the
 same as the vowel **ai** in the stem. It is not a true **aḷapeṭai** because
 it does not reflect the elongation of **ai**. However, **puṭai-ip** is **nirai-nēr**
 and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot **pūnāru**
 in the poem.]

²⁴ puṭaittoṭu **puṭaii** has to be understood as puṭaittoṭupu ‘slammed on their sides’ and **uṭaii**
 ‘split open.’

(infinitive; suffixation; metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

nin ... taṭakkai ... **iraiiya** malarpu aṟiyā (pati.52:10-12)

‘your strong hands do not know opening up **for begging**’

[**iraiiya** ‘in order to beg’ < **ira** ‘to beg’ + **iya** infinitive suffix. Note that the **ai** in the cluster **aii** has resulted from the vowel **a** in the stem. It is not a true **aḷapeṭai** because it does not reflect the elongation of **ai**. However, **irai-iya** is **nirai-nirai** and produces **nirai onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the preceding foot which occurs in the same line in the poem: irappōrkkuk kavita lallatai **iraiiya**.]

(compound; metrical requirement)

taiit tiṅkaḷ

(kuru.196:4)

‘the month of **Tai**’

[**taii** < **tai** ‘the month of **Tai**.’ Note that the **ai** in the stem is elongated for meter. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Without the elongation, **tai** would not qualify as a foot. Now, **tai-i** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

ōo:

This juxtaposition occurs in two circumstances: (i) when the long vowel **ō** is elongated in the first syllable of the stem; (ii) when a suffix beginning with **y** is added to a monosyllabic stem.

(nominal form; metrical requirement)

kōol cemmaiyiṇ cāṇṇōr palki

(puṛa.117:6)

‘Since the (king’s) **sceptre** is (unswervingly) straight/perfect, the noble ones were many (in his country), and ...’

[**kōol** < **kōl** ‘staff/sceptre.’ See the explanation given above in the case of **yāam**. Here, **kō-ol** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

(vocative; metrical fulfillment is concomitant)

ēe yōo veṇaviḷi yērpikka (*pari.19:61*)

‘as (she) called out “Hey” and “Oh” ...’

[**ōo** < **ō** ‘Oh!’ The long **ō** is elongated and it is a true **aḷapeṭai**. **yō-o** is **nēr-nēr** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]

(adjectival participle; suffixation; metrical requirement)

pōoya vaṇṭiṇāl pullenṇa tuṇaiyavāy (*kali.134:7*)

‘with the shore which turned desolate

because of the bees **which left**’

[**pōoya** ‘those which are gone’

< **pō** ‘to go’ + **y** past/completive marker + **a** adjp. suffix

The stem-final **ō** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Without the elongation, **pō-ya** would be **nēr-nēr** and produce **nēr onṇu āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. With the elongation, **pō-oya** is **nēr-nirai** and produces **iyarcīr veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]

ṇṇ:

(nominal form; metrical requirement)

marañṇ koṭṭi (*malai:200*)

‘knocking on the **trees**’

[**marañṇ** < **maram** ‘tree.’ The final consonant of the noun **maram** is changed to **ṇ** because of the following **k**. Without the elongation, **marañ** would not qualify as a foot. With the elongation, the second consonant in **ṇṇ** achieves the status of a **nēr acai**. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Thus, **marañ-ṇ** with the pattern **nirai-nēr** qualifies as a proper **cīr** here. It produces **nēr onṇu āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

ṇṇ:

(noun; metrical requirement)

kaṇṇ taṇṇṇeṇa k kaṇṭum kēṭṭum (malai:352)

‘seeing with (your) eyes clearly and hearing pleasant sounds’

[**kaṇṇ** < **kaṇ** ‘eye’; Without the elongation, **kaṇ** would be a **nēr acai**, but cannot function as a foot. The elongation enables **kaṇ** to be a **nēr acai** and the second **ṇ** also to be a **nēr acai**. As a result, **kaṇ-ṇ** qualifies as a foot of the pattern **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**.]²⁵**ṇṇ:**

(onomatopoeia; no metrical significance)

kaṇṇ taṇṇṇeṇak kaṇṭum kēṭṭum²⁶ (malai:352)

‘seeing with (your) eyes clearly and hearing pleasant sounds’

[The onomatopoetic word **taṇṇ**, derived from **taṇ** ‘cool, soothing’ + echo syllable **ṇ**, denotes the soothing effect of listening to pleasant sounds. The elongation **ṇṇ** in this word is not necessary here for fulfilling metrical requirement. It is to be treated as a part of the word **taṇṇ**. Thus, **taṇṇ-ṇeṇak** is to be taken as **nēr-nirai** producing **iyarcir veṇ taḷai** with the following foot.]**mm:**

(nominal form; metrical requirement)

ceyymm mēval ciṟukaṇ paṇṇi (narr.98:2)

‘small-eyed boar dwelling in the field’

[**ceyy** < **cey** ‘cultivated field.’ While **yy** is part of the elongated stem **cey**, **ym** results from joining **cey** and **mēval** ‘dwelling, residing.’]²⁵ This example is discussed at length in “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry.”²⁶ See note 25.

Without any elongation, the word would be **ceym**, a **nēr acai**, which is not a metrical foot and therefore would not fulfill the metrical requirement in this context. If there is no elongation of **m**, the form **ceymm** would not produce any acceptable metrical pattern, because **cey** has to be separated from **y** and **m** (**cey-y-m**), which, in turn, does not fall into any acceptable pattern. So, the **m** also has to be elongated to result in **ceyymm**. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Now, the form **ceyymm** cannot be scanned as **cey-y-mm** to result in **nēr-nēr-nēr**, because it would then be a **mū-acai-c-ċīr** ‘a foot made up of three **acai**’ which is not proper to occur in this line. Therefore, the form **ceyymm** must be scanned as **ceyy-mm**. It is of the pattern **nēr-nēr** and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot. This example is one of a kind (*hapax legomenon*) in classical Tamil.]

II:

(nominal form; no metrical significance)

tāl ... **kolllērrin** maruppuppōṇṇaṇa (pura.4:3-4)

‘The feet (of the warriors) were like the horns of a **killer-bull**.’

[**kollēru** < **kol** ‘to kill’ + **ēru** ‘bull’; The non-elongated form **kol-lēr-rin** would be a **ċīr** of the pattern **nēr-nēr-nēr**. With the elongation also, the form **koll-lēr-rin** is a **ċīr** of the pattern **nēr-nēr-nēr**. So, the elongation **ll** in **kolllērrin** ‘of a killer-bull’ does not seem to be necessary for the meter. However, a few things must be remembered. First, the line is a **vañci aṭi**, so no metrical binding needs to be considered. Second, the elongation allows one to dwell on **ll** for a moment and place the next beat on **lē**. Thus, there would be four beats here, falling on the **acai** marked in bold type: **koll lērrin maruppup pōṇṇaṇa**. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. See “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry” where the whole poem is scanned and the beats are explained. One could also say that the elongation signifies the meanness of the killer-bull.]

nn:

(noun; metrical requirement)

terikōl **ñamann** pōla

(pura.6:9)

‘like the **pointer** of a scale’

[**ñamann** < **ñaman** ‘pointer.’ The stem-final **n** is elongated. It is a true **aḷapeṭai**. Without the elongation, **ñaman** here would not qualify as a foot. With the elongation, the second item in **nn** achieves the status of a **nēr acai** and thus the new form **ñaman-n** with the pattern **nirai-nēr** qualifies as a proper foot and produces **nēr onru āciriya-t-taḷai** with the following foot.]

PERSON-NUMBER-GENDER

GENERAL: Tamil Nouns and verbs fall into two major classes, namely, **uyar tiṇai** ‘the high class/group’ and **aḥṛiṇai** ‘the non-high class/group.’ The high class/group nouns and verbs are those which refer to the names and actions of human beings and gods, while the non-high class/group nouns and verbs denote the names and actions of other beings and objects like the animals, trees, etc. The first, second, and third are the three persons recognized through Tamil verbs and nouns. Usually, they are marked for the first person, second person, and third person. Two numbers, the singular and the plural, are used. In the category of the plural, the one that includes the listener can be understood as the “inclusive plural,” the one that excludes the listener as the “exclusive plural.” The plural form of a noun or a verb is also used for referring to a single person’s identity or action when politeness or honor is intended; this type of plural-singular blend may be considered either as the “honorific singular” or as the “honorific plural.” One could also call it the “polite” form. Masculine, feminine, and neuter are the three genders recognized.

The notions of person, number, and gender are integrated in the following way. The first and second person nouns and verbs are marked for their number but not for gender. Among the third person nouns and verbs, the “high class” (**uyar tiṇai**) nouns and verbs have masculine singular, feminine singular, and human plural forms, with no separate categories for masculine plural and feminine plural. A noun or verb referring to a group of females and males belongs to the category of “human plural.” In the “non-high class” (**aḥṛiṇai**) group, there are neuter singular and neuter plural nouns and verbs. In this group, no gender distinction is made. Some male and female animals do have separate names, but these names are not distinguished grammatically as “female nouns” and “male nouns.” All of them are neuter nouns, singular or plural.

THE PERSON-NUMBER-GENDER CATEGORIES

- first person singular
- first person inclusive plural/honorific
- first person exclusive plural/honorific
- second person singular
- second person plural/honorific
- third person masculine (singular)
- third person feminine (singular)
- third person human plural (masculine and feminine as a group)
- (third person) neuter singular
- (third person) neuter plural

Note that there is no formal difference between the categories of plural and honorific in the high class (**uyar tiṇai**) groups. Since the plural suffixes and the honorific suffixes are formally alike, context alone is the determinant when one has to distinguish the two. No honorific suffix in the neuter categories is found in classical Tamil poems.

Suffixes representing various person-number-gender categories are referred to as “person-number-gender suffixes” or simply “PNG” in this study. They are added to nominal and verbal stems, and are illustrated in the following sections.

SINGULAR AND PLURAL

GENERAL: There are only two grammatical numbers in Tamil — singular and plural. An entity which is one in number is singular, and those which are more than one are plural. See also “Person-Number-Gender.”

FORMATION: The singular items are unmarked in the sense that they are taken to be the basic forms from which the plural forms are derived. Plural forms of nouns and verbs are derived by a suffixation process in which plural suffixes are added to various stems which are semantically and formally singular in number. Rarely, the plural suffix **kaḷ** is added to a noun which is already marked for plural. An example is given below. Plural suffixes are optional for neuter nouns and obligatory for human plural nouns. When the nouns are unmarked for plurality, their modifiers or verbs or the context in which they occur indicate the plurality. In the case of the finite verb forms, singular and plural suffixes are explicit.

The plural suffixes are **a**, **ā**, **ai**, **kaḷ**, **m**, **mar**, **mār**, and **r**.¹ They are found in nominals and verbals, and except for **kaḷ** and **mār**, in singular forms also. Moreover, **m** and **r** are preceded by a number of variant vowels. The letters preceding the suffix **a** and the vowels that precede **m** or **r** are items like a glide, tense/aspect marker, an augment, or that which indicates the person.

EXAMPLES OF PLURAL NOUNS WITH PLURAL SUFFIXES

Formation mechanism: stem ± glide/**an/in** + suffix

Suffix Structure and Example

a:

(adjectival stem + glide + **a**)

maṭava ... **koṇṇai** (*kuṟu.66:1*)

[**maṭa** ‘gullible’; **maṭava** < **maṭa** + glide **v** + **a**]

‘The **koṇṇai** trees are **gullible**.’

(past stem + **a**)

muṇivu ceyta **ivaḷ** ... **tōḷē** (*aiṅk.143:3*)

[**cey** ‘to do’; **ceyta** < **ceyt** + **a**]

‘Her shoulders **made** (me) agonize.’

‘Her shoulders **caused** agony.’

(non-past stem + **a**)

aṟu kuḷam niraikkuna **pōla** (*aka.11:13*)

¹ A neater way would be to posit the plural markers as just **a**, **ā**, **ai**, **kaḷ**, **m**, and **r**. Some might consider **mar** and **mār** as variants of one form, and therefore not list them as separate items. More comprehensive examples illustrating these suffixes are provided in the following pages in various sections.

[**nīrai** ‘to fill up’; **nīraikkuna** < **nīraikkun** + **a**]
 ‘as if **they are filling up** a dry pond’

ā:

(bare verb stem + **ā**)

nāñcil āṭā (*pati.25:1*)
 [**āṭu** ‘to move’; **āṭā** < **āṭu** + **ā**]
 ‘the ploughs **will not move**’

ai:

(non-past stem + **avai**)

uṭuppavai iraṇṭē (*puṛa.189:5*)
 [**uṭu** ‘to wear’; **uṭuppavai** non-past participial noun
 < **uṭupp** + **avai**]
 ‘Two are (the pieces of clothing) **that are** (normally) **worn.**’

kaḷ:

(singular noun + **kaḷ**)

num iyaṅkaḷ (*malai:277*)
 [**iyam** ‘musical instrument’; **iyaṅkaḷ** < **iyam** + **kaḷ**]
 ‘your **musical instruments**’

(plural noun + **kaḷ**)

aivar eṇṇu ulaku ēttum aracarkaḷ (*kali.25:3*)
 [**aracan** ‘king’; **aracar** ‘kings’;
aracarkaḷ < **aracar** + **kaḷ**]
 ‘the **kings** who are praised by the world as “the Five (i.e., the Pāṇḍavas)” ’

m:

(pronoun)

piritum nām (*aka.5:28*)

[**nām** ‘we’; here, first person honorific]
 ‘We will depart.’

(nominal stem + glide + **am**)

uḷaiyam (*aka.5:27*)

[**uḷai** ‘vicinity, nearby’; **uḷaiyam** < **uḷai** + glide **y** + **am**]
 ‘We (first person honorific) are near (her).’

(past stem + **aṇ** + **am**)

kaṭintanam celavē (*aka.5:26*)

[**kaṭi** ‘to avoid’; **kaṭintanam** < **kaṭint** + **aṇ** + **am**]
 ‘We (first person honorific) avoided the journey.’

(past stem + **ām**)

kaiyoṭu kōṭpaṭṭām (*kali.115:3*)

[**kōṭpaṭu** ‘to be caught’; **kōṭpaṭṭ** + **ām**]
 ‘We were caught red handed.’

(past stem + **ikum**)

kēṭṭikum (*pati.52:12*)

[**kēḷ** ‘to hear’; **kēṭṭ** + **ikum**]
 ‘We heard.’

(non-past stem + **um**)

kaṇṇum civakkum (*kuṟu.354:1*)

[**civa** ‘to become red’; **civakk** + **um**]
 ‘The eyes too will be red.’

(non-past stem + **um**)

yām avaṇiṇṇum varutum (*ciṟu:143*)

[**var** ‘to come’; **varutum** < **varut** + **um**]
 ‘We come from there’
 ‘We are coming from there.’

(past stem + **in** + **em**)

curukkinem kala-p-pai (*puṛa.206:10*)

[**curukku** ‘to string, tie up’; **curukki** + **in** + **em**]²

‘We have tied up our bags of musical instruments.’

(past stem + **ēm**)

vēṭṭēmē (*aiṅk.2:6*)

[**vē**] ‘to wish for, pray’; **vēṭṭ** + **ēm**]

‘We prayed/wished for.’

(non-past stem + **ōm**)

pulampoṭu terumaral uyakkamum **tīrkkuvōm** (*puṛa.381:15-16*)

[**tīr** ‘to vanish; to remove, cure’; **tīrkkuv** + **ōm**]

‘We shall remove your loneliness and grief from wandering.’

mar:

(oblique stem + **mar**)

patinmar (*kali.108:48*)

[**pattu** ‘ten’; **patinmar** < **patin** oblique of **pattu** + **mar**]

‘ten people’

mār:

(singular noun + **mār**)

tōlimārum yāṇum (*aka.15:9*)

[**tōli** ‘female companion’; **tōlimār** < **tōli** + **mār**]

‘(my) female companions and I’

² An alternative analysis would be: **curukku** + **in** + **em**. See “The Past Personal Verbs” for considering the past stem to be **curukki**.

r:

(adjectival stem + glide + ar)

maṛavar

(narr.18:6)

[maṛam ‘valor’; maṛavar < maṛa + glide v + ar]
‘warriors’

(nominal stem + glide + ar)

nakaivar ... pakaivar

(puṛa.398:9)

[nakai ‘laughter’; pakai ‘hostility, enmity’;
nakaivar < nakai + glide v + ar;
pakaivar < pakai + glide v + ar]
‘allies/friends; ... enemies’

(nominal stem + glide + ar)

valaiñar kuṭi

(peru:274)

[valai ‘net’; valaiñar < valai + glide ñ + ar]
‘residences of the people with (fishing) nets’

(non-past stem + ar)

pāṭunarkku ... ikunar

(puṛa.235:17)

[ī ‘to give’; ikunar < ikun + ar]
‘those who give to the singers’

(non-past stem + ar)

poṇ urai kāṇmar

(matu:513)

[kāṇ ‘to see, estimate, evaluate’; kāṇmar < kāṇm + ar]
‘those who estimate the value of gold from (its) rubbing (on a stone)’

(past stem + in + ar)

nākaṇ kūriṇar

(puṛa.179:12)

[**kūru** ‘to state, speak’; **kūrinar** < **kūri** + **in** + **ar**]³
 ‘They spoke of Nākaṇ.’

(non-past stem + **avar**)

atari **kolpavar** (matu:94)
 [**kol** ‘to take hold, grasp’; **kolpavar** < **kolp** + **avar**]
 ‘those who take hold of the hay’

(past stem + **ār**)

cāyttār talai (kali.39:25)
 [**cāy** ‘to stoop, hang’; **cāyttār** < **cāytt** + **ār**]
 ‘They put their heads down.’

(non-past stem + **an** + **ār**)

kālai āvatu ariyār mālai enmanār mayaṅkiyōrē (kali.119:15-16)
 [**en** ‘to say’; **enmanār** < **enm** + **an** + **ār**]
 ‘Those who say that it is evening, not knowing that it is morning,
 are confused.’

(past stem + **ir**)

muṇṇum **koṇṭir** (pura.203:5)
 [**kol** ‘to receive’; **koṇṭir** < **koṇṭ** + **ir**]
 ‘You received (gifts) previously also.’

(past stem + **ir**)

ellīrum eṇ **ceytir** (kali.142:15)
 [**cey** ‘to do’; **ceytir** < **ceyt** + **ir**]
 ‘What did you all do?’

³ An alternative analysis would be: **kūru** + **in** + **ar**. See “The Past Personal Verbs” for considering the past stem to be **kūri**.

(past stem + *ōr*)**ceytōr** ... kuṛi (aka.25:13)[**cey** 'to make, set up'; **ceytōr** < **ceyt** + *ōr*]'He (hon.) **set up** (a time for) our rendezvous.'(non-past stem + *ōr*)**niṇaiyumōrē** (narr.104:12)[**niṇai** 'to think'; **niṇaiyumōr** < **niṇaiyum** + *ōr*]

'those who think (of ...)'

EXAMPLES OF PLURAL NOUNS WITHOUT PLURAL SUFFIXES

kaḷa ... puḷittāṇa **viḷa** ... paḷuniṇa (aka.394:1)[**kaḷa**, **viḷa** kinds of fruits]'the **kaḷa** fruits turned sour; the **viḷa** fruits turned ripe'**ciṇai p pū** (pura.11:4)[**pū** 'flower']

'flowers on the branches'

poyyum uḷavō (aka.48:19)[**poy** 'lie']

'Are their lies too?'

munṇūru ūr (pura.110:4)[**ūr** 'town']

'three hundred towns'

NOUNS

GENERAL: A noun is a name for a quality, person, time, place, thing, number, direction, or process/action. In this study, Tamil nouns are classified as pronouns, numerals, adjectival/appellative nouns, participial nouns, and verbal nouns. These nouns are declinable. That is to say that case markers can be added to them. Except for the numerals and verbal nouns, they are declined by person and gender. Note that the adjectival/appellative nouns are declinable whereas the adjectives are not. See “Pronouns” for the numeral pronouns distinguished by person in the Tamil of this period. See “Person-Number-Gender” for the various person, number, and gender categories.

FORMATION: All nouns appear to be derived from roots through the addition of formative suffixes. However, some nouns have recognizably meaningful parts, while others do not. In some cases, only one part in the noun is identifiable as a meaningful component. For practical purposes, it is useful to treat such nouns as given lexical items.

See also “Pronouns,” “Numerals,” “Adjectival Nouns or Appellative Nouns,” and the chapters on participial nouns and verbal nouns.

EXAMPLES

All the parts in the noun are identifiable:

inmai 'non-existing' < **il** 'to be absent' + **mai** (verbal noun suffix)
(aka.1:14)

murukan (personal name) < **muruku** 'beauty, youth' + **an** PNG
(aka.1:3)

valaṅkunar 'passers by'
 < **valaṅku** 'to move around' + **n** (non-past marker) + **ar** PNG
 (aka.1:14)

Only one part in the noun is identifiable:

kutirai 'horse' < **kuti** 'to leap, hop' + **r** (glide?) + **ai** (aka.1:2)

None of the parts in the noun is identifiable:

yānai 'elephant' (aka.1:4)

nel 'grain' (aka.1:13)

PRONOUNS

GENERAL: Pronouns substitute for other kinds of nouns. There are in classical Tamil personal, demonstrative/deictic, interrogative, and numerical pronouns. Personal pronouns substitute for names of people and neuter nouns. Demonstrative/deictic pronouns distinguish the location of items in reference to that of the speaker in terms of proximity, remoteness, or yonder (which includes unseen places). Interrogative pronouns are derived from **e** and **yā**, and convey the meanings ‘who?’, ‘what?’, ‘where?’, and ‘which?’. Numerical pronouns are derived from the numerals.

See “Person-Number-Gender” for the different categories of person, number, and gender. See “The Oblique Stem” for the oblique forms of pronouns. A consolidated list of the pronouns is given in the “Appendix.”

EXAMPLES

Personal Pronouns

	Singular	Inc. pl/hon.	Exc.pl/hon.
1st person	nān 'I' (<i>pari.20:82</i>) yān 'I' (<i>kuri:12</i>)	nām 'we' (<i>kuri:22</i>)	yām 'we' (<i>malai:53</i>)
2nd person	nī 'you' (<i>kuri:8</i>)		nīyir 'you' (<i>aka.8:17</i>) nīr 'you' (<i>matu:738</i>)
3rd person	tān 'he' (<i>malai:559</i>) tān 'she' (<i>narr.12:9</i>) tān 'it' (<i>kali.21:10</i>)		tām 'they' (<i>matu:422</i>) tām 'those things' (<i>kali.9:19</i>)
Emphatic	tān 'it indeed' (<i>kali.21:10</i>)		tām 'they indeed' (<i>kali.9:19</i>)

	Singular	Inc. pl/hon.	Exc.pl/hon.
Reflexive	atu 'it' (<i>pari.15:53</i>)		avai 'they' (<i>pari.15:7</i>)
	aḥtu 'it' (<i>aka.335:3</i>)		
	tān 'it' (<i>pura.109:1; 173:3</i>)		tām 'they' (<i>pura.257:10</i>)
	tan 'his' (<i>kali.63:17</i>)		
	tan 'self' (<i>aink 303:2</i>)		

Demonstrative/Deictic Pronouns

	Number	Proximate	Remote	Yonder
3rd person masculine	singular	ivan 'he' (<i>kuṛu.229:1</i>)	avan 'he' ¹ (<i>pari.20:82</i>)	uvan 'he' (<i>pari.12:55</i>)
	plural/ honorific	ivar 'these boys' (<i>pura.46:3</i>)	avar 'those men' (<i>pari.5:40</i>)	

¹ The form **avan** was also used once to refer to a bird ("Garuda") associated with a deity (Vishnu): *pari.4:42*.

	Number	Proximate	Remote	Yonder
3rd person feminine	singular	ivaḷ 'she' (<i>kuru</i> 229:1)	avaḷ 'she' (<i>narr.</i> 159:8)	uvaḷ 'she' (<i>pari.</i> 11:123)
	plural	ivar 'these women' (<i>pura.</i> 201:1)	avar 'those women' (<i>pari.</i> 7:44) ²	
3rd person (unidentified)	plural	ivar 'these people' (<i>narr.</i> 6:6)	avar 'those people' (<i>pari.</i> 4:74)	
3rd person neuter	singular	itu 'this one' (<i>narr.</i> 47:6)	atu 'that one' (<i>narr.</i> 24:9)	utu 'that one' (<i>narr.</i> 96:3)
		iḥtu 'this one' (<i>kuru.</i> 158:6)	aḥtu 'that one' (<i>kuru.</i> 18:3)	
	plural	iv 'these ones' (<i>pari.</i> 4:33)	av 'those ones' (<i>pari.</i> 4:33)	uv 'those ones' (<i>pari.</i> 4:33)
		ivai 'these ones' (<i>narr.</i> 12:7)	avai 'those ones' (<i>pura.</i> 257:10)	

² In this context **avar** is used as a genitive form.

Interrogative Pronouns

	Singular	Inc. pl./hon.	Exc.pl/hon.
1st person			yārēm 'who are we?' (<i>kali.82:18</i>)
2nd person	yārai 'who are you?' (<i>narr.395:1, 2</i>)		yāvīr 'who are you?' (<i>puṛa.88:1</i>)
			yārīr 'who are you?' (<i>puṛa.141:5</i>) ³
3rd person	evaḷ 'who?, which one?' (<i>pari.6:91</i>)		
feminine	ennaḷ 'woman of what sort?' (<i>narr.312:9</i>)		
	yāraḷ 'who?' (<i>kuṛu.19:5</i>)		
	yāvaḷ 'who?' (<i>aiṅk.370:4</i>)		

³ In this context the particle **ō** also occurs: **yārīrō**.

	Singular	Inc. pl./hon.	Exc.pl/hon.
3rd person masculine	ennan ‘man of what sort?’ (<i>kuṛu.33:2</i>)		ennar ‘men of what sort?’ (<i>narr.64:1</i>)
			evaṇar ‘where is he?’ ‘man of which place?’ (<i>kuṛu.126:2</i>)
	yār ‘who?’ (<i>puṛa.77:6</i>)		
3rd person unidentified			yār ‘who?’ (<i>narr.269:9</i>)
			yāvar ‘who?’ (<i>pati.20:21</i>)
3rd person neuter	evan ‘what?’ (<i>narr.130:9</i>)		ev ‘which ones?’ (<i>puṛa.187:3</i>)
	evan ‘for what reason?’ (<i>kali. 60:14</i>)		
	en ‘why?’ (<i>narr.334:9</i>)		
	enna ‘what?’ (<i>aka.371:11</i>)		yā ‘what?’ (<i>puṛa.167:9</i>)
	enna ‘of what sort?’ (<i>narr.94:7</i>)		yāvai ‘what?’ (<i>aka.42:7</i>)
	ennatu ‘of what kind?, of any kind’ (<i>narr.219:3</i>)		

Singular	Inc. pl./hon.	Exc.pl/hon.
ennai ‘why?, how?’ ‘for what reason?’ (<i>pari.6:94</i>)		
enai ‘what?’ (<i>aka.369:1</i>)		enai ‘how many?’ (<i>pura.301:7</i>)
yātu ‘what kind?, why?’ (<i>pari.20:44</i>)		
yāvaṇatu ‘where?, how?’ (<i>pura.301:8</i>)		
yāvatu ‘in what way?/how?’ (<i>naṛṛ.331:11</i>)		

Demonstrative/Deictic and Interrogative Proforms⁴

Proximate	Remote/Yonder	Interrogative
iṅku ‘here’ (<i>kuṛu.175:5</i>)	aṅku ‘there’ (<i>kuṛi:97</i>)	eṅku(m) ‘where?’ (<i>kali.144:16</i>)
		eññāṅru ‘when?’ (<i>kali.110:16</i>)

⁴ The term “proform” is borrowed from Schiffman (1983:39). Most of these forms function as adverbs.

Proximate	Remote/Yonder	Interrogative
	attuṇai ‘that much’ (<i>kuri</i> :13)	ettuṇai ‘how much?’ (<i>pura</i> .141:13)
impar ‘here’ (<i>pura</i> .287:14)	ampar ‘yonder’ (<i>peru</i> :117)	
	umpar ‘yonder’ (<i>narr</i> .198:3)	
ivaṇ ‘here’ (<i>narr</i> .4:5)	avaṇ ‘there’ (<i>ciṛu</i> :143)	evaṇ ‘where?’ ⁵ (<i>kuru</i> .126:2)
inaṇi ‘of this nature’ (<i>narr</i> .349:5)	anaṇi ‘of that nature’ (<i>narr</i> .70:6)	enaṇi ‘of what nature?’ (<i>pura</i> .136:15)
		enai ‘how many’ (<i>pura</i> .301:7)
inru ‘this day’ (<i>narr</i> .48:1)	anru ‘that day, then’ (<i>aka</i> .19:1) ‘any day’	enrum ‘what day?’ (<i>narr</i> .1:2) ⁶
inrai ‘this day’ (<i>kuru</i> .199:6)	anrai ‘that day’ (<i>narr</i> .48:1)	

⁵ From **evaṇar** ‘Where is he?’ (*kuru*.126:2).

⁶ The actual form attested is **enrum** ‘forever.’

Proximate	Remote/Yonder	Interrogative
īṅkaṇ ‘here’ (<i>narr.70:7</i>)	āṅkaṇ ‘there’ (<i>pati.23:24</i>)	yāṅkaṇum ‘anywhere’ (<i>aka.7:3</i>)
	ūṅkaṇ ‘yonder’ (<i>narr.246:1</i>)	
īṅku ‘here’ (<i>puṛa.36:11</i>)	āṅku ‘there’ (<i>pari.6:104</i>)	yāṅkum ‘everywhere’ (<i>puṛa.56:15</i>) ⁷
	āṅku ‘then’ (<i>puṛa.152:21</i>)	
	āṅkē ‘then’ (<i>kali.90:15</i>)	
	ūṅku ‘before, then’ (<i>narr.101:9</i>)	
īṅku ‘in this manner’ (<i>narr.55:12</i>)	āṅku ‘in that manner’ (<i>kali.18:7</i>)	yāṅku ‘in what way?’ (<i>narr.29:6</i>)
		yāṅkaṇam ‘in what way?’ ‘how?’ (<i>puṛa.30:11</i>)
		yāṅṇaṇam ‘in what way?’ ‘how?’ (<i>narr.338:6</i>)

⁷ Most examples of **yāṅku** mean ‘in what manner?; how?.’

Proximate

īṇṭu ‘here’
(*puṛa.38:16*)

īṇṭai ‘here’
(*kuṛu.54:1*)

ītōli ‘here’
(*kali.117:13*)

īṇ ‘here’
(*aiṅk.401:5*)

Remote/Yonder

āṇṭu ‘there’
(*puṛa.38:16*)

āṇṭai ‘there’
(*kali.20:16*)

ñāṅkar ‘that time’
(*peru.196*)

ñāṅru ‘that day’
(*narr.218:1*)

ñāṅrai ‘that day’
(*narr.287:7*)

Interrogative

yāṇṭu
‘where?’
(*puṛa.86:3*)

yāṇṭu
‘where?’
how?’
(*narr.110:9*)

yāṇṭai
‘where?’
(*kuṛu.379:1*)

Numeral Pronouns: These pronouns are derived by adding PNG to the oblique forms of the numerals.⁸

First person	Second person		Third person
'one' singular		masculine	ottan 'one man' (<i>kali.61:1</i>)
			oruvan 'one man' (<i>aka.110:14</i>)
	oru nī 'you alone' (<i>tiru:294</i>) ⁹		oru tān 'he alone' (<i>puṛa.76:13</i>)
oruvanēn 'I, one person' (<i>kali.140:12</i>)	oruva 'you, one person' (<i>tiru:262</i>)		
		feminine	otti 'one woman' (<i>kali.143:8</i>)
ōr yān 'I alone' (<i>kuṛu.6:4</i>) ¹⁰			orutti 'one woman' (<i>puṛa.144:11</i>)

⁸ All the attested numerical pronouns are given here. See "Numerals" for the oblique forms of the numerals.

⁹ Note that no PNG is added to the oblique stem **oru**.

¹⁰ Note that no PNG is added to the oblique stem **ōr**.

First person honorific	Second person	Third person
	oruvir 'you' (<i>malai:218</i>)	oruvar 'one person' (<i>aink.64:3</i>)
	oruvīr 'you' (<i>puṛa.45:5</i>)	
'two' iruvām 'we two' (<i>kuṛu.237:4</i>)	iruvīr 'you two' (<i>puṛa.45:6</i>)	iruvar 'two people' (<i>aink.64:3</i>)
iruvēm 'we two' (<i>kuṛi:21</i>)		
'three'	mūvir 'you three' (<i>puṛa.109:2</i>)	mūvar 'three people' (<i>poru:54</i>)
'four'		nālvar 'four people' (<i>aka.86:12</i>)
'five'		aivar 'five people' (<i>tiru:254</i>)
'six'		aṛuvar 'six people' (<i>tiru:255</i>)

	First person	Second person	Third person
			e<u>l</u>uvar 'seven people' (<i>ciru:113</i>)
			e<u>n</u>mar 'eight people' (<i>pari.8:5</i>)
			o<u>n</u>pa<u>t</u>i<u>n</u>mar 'nine people' (<i>pati.pati.5:19</i>)
			pa<u>t</u>i<u>n</u>mar 'ten people' (<i>pari.8:4</i>)
			pa<u>n</u>no<u>r</u>uvar 'eleven people' (<i>pari.8:7</i>)
			pa<u>t</u>i<u>n</u>o<u>r</u>u<u>m</u>uvar '33 people' (<i>tiru:167</i>)
			īraim<u>pa</u>t<u>i</u>n<u>ma</u>r '100 people' (<i>peru:415</i>)
			nū<u>r</u>ruvar 'The Hundred' (<i>kali.52:2</i>)

SECTION 2

THE OBLIQUE STEM

GENERAL: See “A Note on Stems” in “Morphophonemics.” The form a nominal stem assumes before adding a case marker, postposition, particle, or another nominal is here called the “oblique stem.” Besides serving as a base for a case marker, postposition, particle, or another noun, the oblique stem provides a genitive, accusative, instrumental, locative, or directional meaning in classical Tamil.

FORMATION: The oblique stem of a plural noun is not different from its non-oblique stem. The oblique stems of singular nouns are formally different from their corresponding non-oblique stems in many instances. These forms are normally treated as given lexical items or as derived by

suffixing one of the “inflectional increments” **akku**, **attu**, **am**, **an**, **ān**, **ikku**, **in**, **on**, **varru** etc.¹ This study considers the oblique stem as derived in two ways:

- (i) by stem mutation. This type of oblique stem is here referred to as the “mutated oblique stem.” See “Formation Mechanisms” and “Morphophonemics” for stem mutation.
- (ii) by suffixation: **an** or **in** is suffixed to the nominal stem.

The oblique stems of personal pronouns and other nominals are given below. See “Numerals” and “Adjectives or Noun Modifiers” for information on the oblique stems of numerals and adjectives.

The Oblique Stems of Personal Pronouns: These forms contain short vowels and **n** or **m** indicating singularity and plurality respectively.

	Non-Oblique Stem	Oblique Stem
1st sg.	nān ‘I’ (<i>pari.20:82</i>)	en ‘my’ (<i>narr.355:10</i>)
1st sg.	yān ‘I’ (<i>kuṛi:12</i>)	en ‘my’ (<i>narr.355:10</i>)
1st pl. excl.	yām ‘we’ (<i>malai:53</i>)	em ‘our’ (<i>narr.150:7</i>)

¹ In the tradition, the “inflectional increments” are known as the **cāriyai**. **akku**, **attu**, **am**, **an**, **ān**, **ikku**, **in**, **on**, and **varru** are the **cāriyai** listed in the *Tolkāppiyam* (eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 120). *Naṇṇūl* (Rule 244) lists **an**, **ān**, **in**, **al**, **arru**, **irru**, **attu**, **am**, **tam**,

1st pl. incl.	nām 'we' (<i>kuri</i> :22)	nam 'our' (<i>aink</i> .39:2)
2nd sg.	nī 'you' (<i>tiru</i> :64)	nin 'your' (<i>tiru</i> :272) un 'your' (<i>aka</i> .222:2) tan 'your' (<i>pura</i> .387:14)
2nd pl.	nīr 'you' (<i>matu</i> :738) nīyir 'you' (<i>aka</i> .8:17)	num 'your' (<i>pari</i> .20:85) um 'your' (<i>pari</i> .20:84) num 'your' (<i>pari</i> .20:85) um 'your' (<i>pari</i> .20:84)
3rd sg.	tān 'he' (<i>malai</i> :559)	tan 'his' (<i>aink</i> .480:3) tan 'its' (<i>kali</i> .67:3)
3rd pl.	tām 'they' (<i>matu</i> :422)	tam 'their' (<i>pura</i> .153:12)

nam, **num**, **ē**, **a**, **u**, **ai**, **ku**, and **n** as the **cāriyai**. Traditional grammarians use these inflectional increments to explain oblique forms.

The Oblique Stems of Nominals Which Are Not Personal Pronouns:²

- (i) Non-monosyllabic nouns ending with **m** have mutated oblique stems ending with **tt(u)**.
- (ii) Nouns ending with **tu** have mutated oblique stems ending with **tt(u)**.
- (iii) The pronouns **atu** 'that one' and **itu** 'this one' have oblique stems **atan** and **itan** respectively.³
- (iv) The pronoun **avai** 'they (neuter), those things', non-monosyllabic nouns ending with **l**, and nouns ending with **ru** have their mutated oblique stems ending with **rru**.
- (v) Other nouns, including the demonstrative/deictic pronouns, keep their non-oblique stems to serve as oblique stems.

EXAMPLES

Oblique Stems of Pronouns:

(First person singular; genitive meaning)

en **tōli** mēṇi

(*kuṛi:2*)

[**en** < **yān** 'I']

'my friend's body'

(First person exclusive plural; genitive meaning)

em **tol** **pati**

(*malai:567*)

[**em** < **yām** 'we']

'our ancient town'

² These forms include the demonstrative/deictic pronouns, and all are illustrated below.

³ By extension, ***etan** 'which one's?'; **atin** 'that one's'; ***itin** 'this one's'; and ***etin** 'which one's?' Example: **atin** varavu 'its arrival' (*pari.11:36*).

(First person honorific plural; accusative meaning)

anru **nam** ariyāy (aka.33:18)
 [nam < yām ‘I (hon.)’]
 ‘You **did not know me** then.’

(Second person singular; genitive meaning)

un mēṇi āy nalam (aka.222:2-3)
 [un < nī ‘you’]
 ‘**your body**’s subtle loveliness’

(Second person singular; genitive meaning)

viṇaliyar **nin** puram curra (malai:46)
 [nin < nī ‘you’]
 ‘as the dancing women surround **your side**’

(Second person honorific; genitive meaning)

aḥtu **um** maṇai (aka.56:14)
 [um ‘your’ < un ‘your’]⁴
 ‘That is **your** house.’

⁴ It is more logical to derive **um** (‘your’ plural) from **un** (‘your’ singular) rather than from **nīr** (‘you’ plural).

(Second person plural; genitive meaning)

num iyam

(*malai:232*)

[**num** ‘your’ < ***nun** ‘your’]⁵

‘your musical instruments’

(Third person singular; unmarked for gender; genitive meaning)

yāmai **tan** pāppu ōmpa

(*poru:186*)

[**tan** < **tān** ‘it’]

‘as the turtle protects its young one’

(Third person honorific/plural; genitive meaning;

base for associative case marker **oṭu**)

tam peyar tammoṭu koṇṇar māyntōr

(*malai:553*)

[**tam** < **tām** ‘they’]

‘those who died taking away with them their (own) names’

(Third person masculine singular; genitive meaning)

ivan ... koṭum **col** ōmpumiṇ

(*naṛr.200:10-11*)

[**ivan** ‘(this) he’]⁶

‘Keep away from his cruel words.’

⁵ It is more logical to derive **num** (‘your’ plural) from ***nun** (‘your’ singular) rather than from **niyir** (‘you’ plural). Nevertheless, Tolkāppiyam derives **num** (‘your’ plural) from **niyir** (‘you’ plural/honorific). Cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Iḷampūraṇam, Rule 327.

⁶ The other forms are **avan** ‘(that) his’ (*pati.56:3*) and **avar** ‘(that) his (hon.)’ (*kuṟu.392:2*). For more on pronouns, see “Pronouns.”

(Third person feminine singular; genitive meaning)

ivaḷ paṇi vār kaṇ (aka.77:19)
 [ivaḷ ‘(this) she’]⁷
 ‘her eyes which are shedding tears’

(Third person human plural; genitive meaning)

ivar maṛaṇ (pura.337:19)
 [ivar ‘these people’]
 ‘their valor’

(Third person neuter singular; genitive meaning)

ataṇ niṛam (kali.52:3-4)
 [ataṇ < atu ‘that one’ + aṇ]
 ‘its body (chest)’

(Third person neuter plural; base for the postposition uḷ)

avarṛuḷ (pati.43:4)
 [avarṛ < avai ‘those things’]
 ‘among them / those things’

Oblique Stems Of Non-Pronouns:

poṇ-am-kompu (pari. 7:56)
 [poṇ ‘gold’]
 ‘golden vine (-like woman)’

(Note that the oblique stem [poṇ] is the same as the nominal stem [poṇ]. It serves as the base for the particle **am**, which here provides a comparative sense.)

⁷ The other forms are **avaḷ** ‘(that) her’ (aink.378:3) and **evaḷ** ‘whose?.’ No example of **evaḷ** used in an oblique sense is found.

cēṭṭirunkō (pura.201:13)

[cēṭṭ mutated oblique < cēṇ ‘large, lofty’]

‘big, lofty king’

(cēṭṭ serves as the base for the adjective iru[m] ‘big’ in forming a compound noun.)

ōr yāṭṭu oru kāl (kali.71:26)

[yāṭṭu mutated oblique < yāṇṭu ‘year’]

‘once in one year’

(yāṭṭu provides a locative [temporal] sense.)

cōṇāṭṭu ... uppiṇ kollai cārri (paṭṭ:28-29)

[cōṇāṭṭu < cōl(a) ‘the cōla dynasty’ + nāṭṭu;

nāṭṭu mutated oblique < nāṭu ‘country’]

‘announcing the abundance of the salt in the Cōla country’

(cōṇāṭṭu provides a locative [spatial] sense.)

cenmō ... em ... nāṭṭu (pura.381:5)

[nāṭṭu mutated oblique < nāṭu ‘country’]

‘We shall go to our country.’

(nāṭṭu provides a directional sense.)

annattu c cēval (matu:386)

[annattu mutated oblique < annam ‘goose’]

‘the male of the goose’

(annattu provides a genitive sense.)

kaṭāattu avan yānai (kali.57:18)

[kaṭāatt mutated oblique < kaṭā(a)m ‘rut’]

‘his elephant in rut’

(kaṭāattu provides a genitive sense.)

vaḷḷattu p peyta pāl (kali.72:3)

[**vaḷḷattu** mutated oblique < **vaḷḷam** 'bowl']

'the milk poured **into the bowl**'

(**vaḷḷattu** provides a locative [spatial] sense.)

vētattu maṛai nī (pari.3:66)

[**vētattu** mutated oblique < **vētam** 'The Vedas']

'You are the **secret in the Vedas.**'

(**vētattu** provides a locative [spatial] sense.)

uyarntōr ulakattu p peyarntanan (pura.174:20)

[**ulakattu** mutated oblique < **ulakam** 'world']

'He **proceeded/moved toward the world** of the nobles.'

(**ulakattu** gives a directional sense.)

ēṛru valaṇ uyariya ... maṇi miṭarṇōṇ (pura.56:1-2)

[**ēṛru** mutated oblique < **ēṛu** 'bull']

'the one with dark-colored throat (Śiva), who is **carrying** in his right hand (a flag on which) **a bull** (is painted)'

(**ēṛru** gives an accusative sense.)

pūṇ kayiṛru vāṅki (pari.19:31)

[**kayiṛru** mutated oblique < **kayiṛu** 'rope']

'pulling **with a rope** of flowers'

(**kayiṛru** provides an instrumental sense.)

ñāyiṛru ... vanappu (pari.13:1-2)

[**ñāyiṛru** mutated oblique < **ñāyiṛu** 'sun']

'the **beauty of the sun**'

(**ñāyiṛru** gives a genitive sense.)

niṇ vemmaiyum viḷakkamum **ñāyirruḷa** (pari.4:25)

[See previous example.]

‘Your warmth and brilliance are **in the sun**.’

(**ñāyirru** here gives a locative [spatial] sense.)

veṇ maṇarru aka **vayin** (narr.372:6)

[**maṇarru** mutated oblique < **maṇal** ‘sand’]

‘inside **the white sand**’

(**maṇarru** gives a locative [spatial] sense.)

vayirru-t-tī (pura.74:5)

[**vayirru** mutated oblique < **vayiru** ‘stomach’]

‘the **fire in the stomach**; hunger’

(**vayirru** is the base for the noun **tī** ‘fire’; gives a locative sense.)

CASE MARKERS AND POSTPOSITIONS

GENERAL: Tamil uses case markers or case suffixes and postpositions as prepositions are employed in English. The tradition identifies seven or eight grammatical cases.¹ Each grammatical case is represented by more than one marker, and one marker may represent more than one meaning. The case markers and the postpositions have similar functions, and therefore are treated under one heading in this study. Postpositions, unlike the case markers, are items which are meaningful even when used in isolation. When used in isolation, they give the sense of a location or time. Sometimes they are written separately from the nouns they follow.

¹ The tradition refers to grammatical case as **vēṟṟumai** 'distinction.' According to the *Tolkāppiyam*, there are seven basic cases, and the vocative is considered to be the eighth (*collatikāram*, Rules 62 and 63). The cases are: **peyar/eluvāy** (= nominative), **ai** (= accusative), **oṭu** (= instrumental), **ku** (= dative), **atu** (= genitive, possessive), **kaṇ** (= locative), and **viḷi** (= vocative). Cf. *collatikāram*, Rule 64.

The term for a case marker is **vēṟṟumai urupu** "identifier of distinctions" or "marker that differentiates." There is no traditional term for postposition. As a group, the case markers and postpositions are referred to by the term **iṭaicol** "medial particles" (*Tolkāppiyam*, *collatikāram*, *Cēṇāvaraiyam*, commentary on Rule 250).

Most case markers, on the other hand, are not meaningful when used in isolation; they are suffixed to and written together with the nouns. The few exceptions are **koṇṭu**, **uṭaṇ**, and **kaṇ**, which could as well be considered as postpositions. The various significations given below for the case markers and the postpositions were inferred from the literary contexts in which they appear. It is quite possible to have more than one interpretation in some instances.

FORMATION: The case markers are optionally suffixed to a nominal in its non-oblique or oblique form.² The postpositions follow a nominal in its non-oblique form, oblique form, associative case form, or dative case form. They also follow an adjectival participle and rarely a verb stem. Neither the singular-plural distinction nor the person-number-gender distinction is made by the case markers or postpositions.

EXAMPLES OF ITEMS UNMARKED BY A CASE MARKER

(‘subject’)

pacittanṛamma ... ūrē³ (pura.318:3)
 ‘The town (i.e., people) was hungry.’

(accusative)

curṛamum emmum uḷḷāḷ (aka.17:6)
 ‘She did not think of me and (her) companions.’
onnār k kaṭantu aṭṭāṇ (pari.15:44-45)
 ‘He crossed and defeated/killed the enemies.’

² See “The Oblique Stem” for information on oblique forms.

³ In modern Tamil it would be **ūrukku p pacittatu** which might be considered as a subject in the dative case.

(instrumental)

kai cuṭṭi (pari.9:35)
 ‘pointing with (his) hand’

(associative)

kēḷir t tiḷaikkum (pari.11:58)
 ‘(They) mingle with their friends.’

(locative)

mēṇi t tiru ... amarnta mārpinaḷ (pari.1:7-8)
 ‘You have a chest on the surface of which Tiru (goddess of prosperity) has taken abode.’

(ablative)

vaḷi nīṅka (pari.19:32)
 ‘to move away from the path’

(directional)

poruṭpiṇi p pirinta nī (aka.79:17)
 ‘you, who have moved/departed toward the obsession of wealth’

Note that in many of these examples a hard consonant (**k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**) is doubled between the two items entering into a case relation. The first of these two items does not contain a case marker and the second item which follows the first is either a verb or a noun holding a case relation with the first. The initial consonant, (**k**, **c**, **t**, or **p**), of the second item is doubled signifying its case relation with the first. Only the context determines the meaning of the case.

Case Markers and Postpositions

The case markers and the postpositions found in classical Tamil are: **a**, **akku**, **akam**, **atu**, **ayal**, **aḷavu**, **aḷavai**, **aṇ**, **ā**, **āṅkaṇ**, **āṅku**, **ātu**, **āyiṭai**, **āl**, **āṇ**, **āru**, **iṭam/iṭaṇ**, **iṭai**, **il**, **iṇ**, **ukku**, **uṭaṇ**, **uṭai**, **uṭaiya**, **umpar**, **uḷi**, **uḷai**, **uḷ**, **u(ḷ)ḷum**, **uḷi**, **uḷ(ḷ)ē**, **ūṅkaṇ**, **ūṅku**, **ūṭu**, **ūḷ**, **etir**, **etirē**, **ellai**, **ē**, **ai**, **oṭu**, **ōṭu**, **k(k)(u)**, **kaṭai**, **kaṇ**, **kāl**, **kālai**, **kārum**, **kīḷ**, **koṇṭu**, **cār**, **ciṭai**, **ñāṅkar**, **ñāṇru**, **ñāṇrai**, **talai**, **taṇ**, **tīram/tīraṇ**, **toru(m)**, **tōrum**, **naṭuvaṇ**, **nāppaṇ**, **ninru(m)**, **pakkam**, **paṭi**, **patam**, **pāṅkar**, **pāṭu**, **pāl**, **piṇ**, **pinrai**, **pinṇar**, **pinṇum**, **puṭai**, **poḷutu**, **pōḷtu**, **māṭṭu**, **māṭṭai**, **māṇ**, **māttiram**, **māttirai**, **micaī**, **mītu**, **mīmicaī**, **mutal (mutal)**, **murai**, **mun(nar)**, **mēl(iruntu)**, **vayam**, **vayiṇ**, **varai**, **vali**, **vāy**, and **viyal**.

Some of these case markers and postpositions are variants of one another: e.g., **ñāṇru** and **ñāṇrai**. Also note that forms like **mēliruntu** < **mēl** + **iruntu** and **mīmicaī** < **mī** + **micaī** are made of two separate items.

EXAMPLES OF CASE MARKERS AND POSTPOSITIONS

Marker/ *Meaning and Example*
Postposition

a: It is added to a nominal.

(genitive/possessive)

avara ... **kayam**

(*pura.15:9-10*)

[**avar** 'they']

'their ponds'

ninna **kaṇṇi**

(*pura.45:3*)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** 'you']

'your head-garland'

akam: It is added to a nominal. When used in isolation, it means ‘inside, interior.’

(temporal limitation: ‘within’)

eṇṇiya nāḷakam

(*aiṅk.466:3*)

[nāḷ ‘day’]⁴

‘within the marked day’

atu: It is added to a nominal. When used in isolation, it means ‘(that) it.’

(genitive/possessive)

kaṭavuḷatu iyaṛkai

(*malai:83*)

[kaṭavuḷ ‘god’]

‘the god’s nature’

naṇṇpinatu aḷavu

(*narr.378:12*)

[naṇṇpin oblique of naṇṇpu ‘friendship’]

‘the extent of (his) friendship’

ayal: It is added to a nominal; it means ‘vicinity, other side, neighborhood.’

(locative [spatial]: ‘by the side of’)

malai ayal

(*narr.108:1*)

[malai ‘mountain’]

‘by the side of the mountain’

niṇ katuppu ayal

(*aiṅk.396:1-2*)

[katuppu ‘tresses’]

‘on (one) side of your tresses’

⁴ In modern Tamil, it would be nāḷukkuḷ or nāḷaikkuḷḷē.

aḷavu: It is added to a nominal or an affirmative adjectival participle; it means ‘measure.’

(spatial limitation: ‘up to the limit’)

vaiyaka varai aḷavu (*narr.130:11*)
 [vaiyakam ‘the earth’; varai ‘limit, edge’]
 ‘up to the limit of the earth’

(temporal limitation: ‘till, until’)

cey poruḷ murrum aḷavu (*kali.24:12*)
 [murrum adjp < murrū ‘to complete’]
 ‘until accomplishing the wealth’

aḷavai: It is added to a non-past/non-completive stem or an adjectival participle; it means ‘measure.’

(temporal limitation: ‘at the time, before [when it follows a negative participle]’)

valippaḷavai (*kali.17:6*)
 [valipp non-past stem < vali ‘to undertake’]
 ‘when (you) undertake’

muyalvaḷavai (*kali.17:10*)
 [muyalv non-past stem < muyal ‘to attempt’]
 ‘when (you) attempt’

ceṇṇu piṇaḷ ākiya aḷavai (*aka.189:10*)
 [ākiya adjp < āku ‘to become’]
 ‘when she left (me and other kin) and became another woman (as a stranger)’

kaṇṇiyatu uṇarā aḷavai (aka.5:6)
 [uṇarā negative adjp < uṇar ‘to realize, know’]
 before realizing/knowing what (I) had decided’

an: It is added to a nominal.

(genitive)

atan niṇam (kali.52:3-4)
 [atu ‘that one’]
 ‘its chest’

ā⁵: It is added to a nominal denoting a location. It functions as an adverb of location.

(locative, spatial)

tāy arukā niṇṇu (pari.11:91)
 [aruku ‘near’]
 ‘standing near (your) mother’

karai mēlā (pari.12:34)
 [mēl ‘on’]
 ‘on the bank/shore’

⁵ In modern written Tamil, it is āka. In spoken Tamil, it is just ā or ē: e.g., ōramā ‘along the corner/side’; mēlē ‘on top, above.’

āṅkaṇ: It is added to a nominal or a verb stem. When used in isolation, it refers to a location, meaning ‘there’ and has a variant, **aṅkaṇ** ‘inside.’⁶

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; on; there; near’)

potiṇi āṅkaṇ (aka.1:4)
[**potiṇi**, name of a hill]
‘at Potiṇi’

avaṇāṅkaṇ ceṇru (kali.143:15-16)
[**avaṇ** ‘(that) he’]
‘going near him’

ilavattu āṅkaṇ (aka.25:9)
[**ilavattu** oblique of **ilavam** ‘cotton tree’]
‘on the ilavam tree’

niḷal il āṅkaṇ (naṟṟ.105:5)
[il ‘not to exist, to be absent’]
‘at that place where there is no shade’

āṅku: It is added to a nominal. See also “The Particles.”

(directional: ‘toward’)

ninṇāṅku varūm eṇ neṅciṇai eṇṇāṅku vārātu ṭampiṇai koṇmē (kali.23:18-19)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **eṇ** oblique of **yān** ‘I’]
‘Shield my mind, which is coming toward you so that it does not come toward me, and accept it.’ (The directional meaning is triggered by the verb of motion **var** ‘to come.’)

⁶ **āṅkaṇ** maṇṇam pōntu ‘there, having arrived at the front yard’ (pati.23:24). pū **aṅkaṇ** ‘inside the flower’ (kali.71:2). It is possible to derive **āṅkaṇ** from **ām** adjp of **ā** ‘to be’ +

ātu: It is a variant of **atu**, and is added to a nominal.

(genitive/possessive)

puṛavil **taṇātu** ceñ-katir-c-celvaṇ teṛutaliṇ (narr.164:1-2)

[**taṇ** oblique of **tāṇ** 'it']

'since **its own** red hot sun is scorching in the forest'

āyiṭai: It consists of two items, **ā** 'that' and **iṭai** 'middle.' It is used in isolation or follows a nominal or case marker.

(locative [spatial]: 'in between')

imayam teṇ-ṇ-añ-kumari-y-oṭu **āyiṭai** (pati.11:23-24)

[**kumariyoṭu** < **kumari** 'the Kumari' + glide **y** + **oṭu** associative marker 'with']

'**there, between** the Himalayas and the beautiful southern Kumari'

(locative [temporal]: 'at that time, thereupon')

āyiṭai māyital koṇṭu (pari.11:93)

[**āyiṭai** 'at that time, thereupon']

'**Thereupon**, (she) wore the dark (flower) petal (on her) ear and ...'

i-c-curam paṭartantōlē **āyiṭai** ... vaḷi vaḷi oṭi mey-t-talai-p-paṭutal
ceyyēṇ (aka.7:13, 15-16)

[**āyiṭai** 'thereupon']

'She went through this forest. **Thereupon**, I did not follow her running all over the place.'

kaṇ 'place.'

āl/ān: It is added to a nominal.

(i) genitive

oḷ oḷi maṇi p **poriyān** maññai (pari.18:7)
 [p**ori** ‘spots’]
 ‘peacocks **with** bright gem-like **spots**’

(ii) instrumental: ‘because of, therefore’

aṛiyāmaiyān maṇantu tuppū etirnta niṇ pakaivar (pati.15:14-15)
 [aṛiyāmai ‘ignorance’]
 ‘your enemies who forgetfully faced your strength **because of their ignorance**’

nī amarntu viḷaiyāṭiya **pōrāl** (pari.5:55-56)
 [p**ōr** ‘war’]
 ‘**because of the war** which you fought playfully’

naṇṇar naṇ moḷi kēṭṭaṇam **ataṇāl** ... evvam kaḷai (mull:17, 21)
 [a**taṇ** oblique of **atu** ‘that one’; a**taṇāl** ‘because of that’]
 ‘We heard good words. **Therefore**, get rid of your grief.’

(iii) instrumental: ‘with the help of, by’

aṭiyai t **talaiyiṇāl** toṭṭu (kali.108:55-56)
 [t**alaiyiṇ** oblique of **talai** ‘head’]
 ‘touching (his) feet **with** (my) **head**’

kaṇṇiṇāl eṇ neṇcam ... koṇṭu āṇṭāy (kali.108:28-29)
 [k**aṇṇiṇ** oblique of **kaṇ** ‘eyes’]
 ‘You reigned, getting hold of my heart **with the help of your eyes**.’

vitiyārṛāl ākkiya mey-k-kalavai (pari.7:20)

[**vitiyārṛ** oblique of **vitiyāru**

< **viti** ‘rules’ + **ārṛ** oblique of **āru** ‘manner’]

‘the fragrant body-paste made **by** (following) **the rules**’

(iv) associative: ‘with; to the accompaniment of’

māru aṭu **tānaiyāl** tiṇaṇ iḱantu varūum avar (pari.13:30-31)

[**tānai** ‘army’]

‘they who transgressed good behavior and are arriving **with** (their) **army** that kills the enemies’⁷

cila **collāl** pala kēḷviyar (pura.360:2)

[**col** ‘words’]

‘those **with few words** and much listening’

paraiyāl puṇal ceṇukkunar (pati. 22:28)

[**parai** ‘drums’]

‘those who prevent the flooding **to the accompaniment of drums**’

(v) locative (spatial): ‘at; in; above; onto; toward; through’

vīyā yāṇar **niṇ** **vayināṇē** (pati.36:1)

[**niṇ** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **vayin** ‘place’]

‘**in your place**, with unfailing bounty’

kīḷ **nīrāṇ** mīṇ vaḷaṅkuntu **mī** **nīrāṇ** ... malar pūkkuntu (pura.396:1-2)

[**kīḷ** **nīr** ‘low/deep water’; **mī** **nīr** ‘top/high water’]

⁷ This interpretation follows the traditional commentary. **tānaiyāl** could be taken as an instrumental form: ‘they, who transgressed good behavior **because of their army** that kills the enemies ...’

‘The fish move around in the deep/low water; the flowers bloom in the high water.’

marattāl kaḷiṟu aṇaittu *(pati.33:3)*
 [maratt oblique of maram ‘tree’]
 ‘tying the elephants onto the trees’⁸

kunrattāl ... varavu *(pari.8:28)*
 [kunratt oblique of kunram ‘hills’]
 ‘the passage/arrival ... through the hills’

cēriyāl cenṟu *(kali.68:16-17)*
 [cēri ‘neighborhood’]
 ‘going through the neighborhood’

(vi) locative (temporal/action): ‘at; in; while’

ciṟu makilānum *(pati.19:12)*
 [makil ‘pleasure, joy’]
 ‘even in short-time pleasure’

alamarum polutinān *(kali.78:7)*
 [polutin oblique of polutu ‘time’]
 ‘when ... being tossed around (by confusion)’

naṇavinān *(kali.68:21)*
 [naṇavin oblique of naṇavu ‘wakeful state’]
 ‘while being awake’

⁸ This could be interpreted as an instrumental usage (“by”), depending upon how one understands the verb **aṇai** ‘to embrace, tie around.’

kaṅkulāṇ
[kaṅkul ‘night’]
‘at night’

(kali.66:4)

(vii) ablative: ‘from’

vārār eṇṇum pulavi uṭkoḷal ... oḷika ... niṇ **neṅcattāṇē** (narr.11:4-5)
[neṅcatt oblique of neṅcam ‘heart’]
‘Do not sulk because he (your lover) has not yet come. May the anger go away **from** your **heart**.’ (Note that the ablative sense is triggered by a verb of motion, **oḷi** ‘to go away.’)

āru: It is added to an adjectival participle; it means ‘path, way, mode.’

(adverb of place)

tāṇ vēṇṭum **āru** (pari.11:110)
[vēṇṭum adjp < vēṇṭu ‘to wish for, want’; **āru** ‘path’]
‘the place which it wanted’

iṭam/iṭaṇ: It is added to an adjectival participle. Basically, it means ‘place.’

(locative [spatial]: ‘place’)

malai cuṭar cēra p **pulampiya iṭaṇ** (kali.126:1-2)
[pulampiya adjp < pulampu ‘to be desolate’]
‘the place which became desolate as the sun reached the mountain’

(locative [temporal]: ‘time’)

nām **kākkum iṭam** (kali.63:3-4)
[kākkum adjp < kā ‘to protect, shield’]
‘the time when we protect’

iṭai: It is added to a nominal.

(i) locative (spatial): ‘in; over; in between; along; through’

kal uyar **kaṭattiṭai** (pati.21:22)
 [kaṭatt oblique of kaṭam ‘forest’]
 ‘in the forest where the mountains are lofty’

kōṭṭiṭai (kali.101:17)
 [kōṭṭ oblique of kōṭu ‘horn’]
 ‘between the horns’

kaiyiṭai vaiittatu meyyiṭai t timirum kavaḷam (narr.360:8-9)
 [kai ‘hand’; mey ‘body’]
 ‘the morsel which was placed in the hand (i.e., trunk of the elephant) and springs/spreads all over the body’

kūṭaloṭu paraṅkunriṇiṭai (pari.17:23-24)
 [paraṅkunrin oblique of paraṅkunru ‘supreme hill, the Paraṅkunru’]
 ‘between the Kūṭal and the Paraṅkunru’

tām iṭai koṇṭatu atu āyiṇ (kali.24:13)
 ‘if that’s what he holds (as a cause) between (us)’

karaiyiṭai k kiḷinta niṇ kāḷakam (kali.73:17)
 [karai ‘border, edge’]
 ‘your strong garb which is torn along the border’

ūriṭai ṭi (pari.6:56)
 [ūr ‘town’]
 ‘flowing through the town’

(ii) 'among'

em iṭaiyē (narr.395:3)
 [em oblique of yām 'we']
 'among us'

il⁹: It is added to a nominal. As a separate word, it means 'place, abode, house.'

(i) locative (spatial): 'in; on; into; down; near; in the vicinity of; among'

arukil kaṇṭum aṇiyār (pura.207:3)
 [aruku 'near; vicinity']
 'those who do not recognize (you) although they see (you) **near** them'

tantai viyaṇ mārpiḷ pāyntāṇ (kali.86:33)
 [mārpu 'chest']
 'He leaped **onto** his father's broad **chest**.'

tuṇaṅkai āṭiya maruṅkiṇ (pati.13:5-6)
 [maruṅku 'location, site, side']
 'at the **location** where (people) performed the tuṇaṅkai (dance)'

cilampil tuṇcum kavari (pati.11:21)
 [cilampu 'hill']
 'the antelope which slumbers **on the hill**'

⁹ It is tempting to group this marker with **in** because occasionally it occurs as **in**. By a morphophonemic change it is sometimes realized as **ir**, as is the marker **in**. Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish between the two markers **il** and **in**. The basic meaning of **il** seems to be locative, while the basic meaning of **in** seems to be genitive.

cāntil ceyta ... itaṇattu (*narr.351:6-7*)
 [cāntu ‘sandalwood’]
 ‘in the loft that was built **on the sandalwood tree**’

maruppil kaṭāam vārntu (*pati.16:6-7*)
 [maruppu ‘tusks’]
 ‘the rut, having flowed **down the tusk(s)**’

nam **cēriyil** pōkā ... pārppāṇ (*kali.65:7-8*)
 [cēri ‘neighborhood’]
 ‘the brahmin who does not go **through our neighborhood**’

tāṇē aritu cel **ulakil** cenṇaṇaṇ (*puṛa.260:20-21*)
 [ulaku ‘world’]
 ‘He went **into the precious world** (of the dead).’
 ‘He reached the precious world (of the dead).’

koṭi koṭi **tammil** piṇaṅkiyavai pōl¹⁰ (*kali.92:52*)
 [tam oblique of tām ‘those things’]
 ‘as if the vines were intertwined **among themselves**’

(ii) locative (temporal/action/manner): ‘in; at’

kuriyil iṇiya kūri (*narr.204:8*)
 [kuri ‘rendezvous’]
 ‘(He) said sweet nothings **at the time of our rendezvous**, and ...’

ellinil peyartal (*aka.100:4*)
 [el ‘dusk’]
 ‘leaving **at dusk**’

¹⁰ In modern Tamil, it is **tamakuḷ**.

iravil puṇarntōr (pari.6:54)
 [iravu 'night']
 'those who are united **at night**'

ītalil kuṛai kāṭṭātu (kali.27:1)
 [ītal 'giving']
 'without showing inadequacy **in giving**'

kālattil tōṇṇiya koṇmū (kali.82:2)
 [kālatt oblique of kālam 'time']
 'the dark cloud (nimbus) which appeared **at the right time**'

iṭṭārkkku yāl ārttum **pāṇiyil** (pari.20:57)
 [pāṇi 'manner']
 'in the manner of making the givers experience the (music of the) harp'
 'in the manner of entertaining the suppliants with harp music'

(iii) instrumental: 'by; with the help of'

kālil ceṇṇum (narr.349:1)
 [kāl 'foot']
 'going **by foot**, and ...'

collil teḷippavum (narr.164:5)
 [col 'words']
 'although (I) reassure (you) **with (my) words**'

ampiyil tālppikkum ... vaiyai (pari.6:75-77)
 [ampi 'raft']
 '(the river) Vaiyai which delays (you) **because of the raft**'

arattinil

(kali.96:33)

[**aratt** oblique of **aram** ‘Righteousness’]
‘by way of **Righteousness** (“dharma”)’

(iv) ablative: ‘from; as source’

ninnil tōṇṇiya ... tāmarai

(pari.4:60)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’]
‘the lotus (flower) which emerged **from you**’

ātirai **mutalvanil** kiḷanta nātar paṇṇoruvar

(pari.8:6-7)

[**mutalvan** ‘the first person, principal’]
‘the eleven chiefs who are talked about (as a group) starting **with the primary one, Ātirai**’

pakkattil pōkātu

(kali.65:12)

[**pakkatt** oblique of **pakkam** ‘nearby, vicinity’]¹¹
‘without going **near** ...’

(v) adverb of manner

aritinil tōṇṇiya yākkai

(kali.141:1)

[**aritu** ‘that which is difficult’]
‘the (human) body which is born / emerged **in difficulty**’

¹¹ This could be interpreted as a directional form: ‘toward.’

in: It is added to a nominal. Many patterns in which it is used to provide a genitive or possessive sense can be discerned.

(i) genitive/possessive: 'of'

Pattern (a): X-iṇ ... Y, where Y has X (virtue, place, area, action, artifact, part, etc.); Y subsumes X.

kāṭalaka **varaippin** i-p-**polil** (pati.14:19)
 [varaippu 'boundary'; polil 'grove']
 'this grove (i.e., the world), **with a boundary** of oceans'
 [ulavu 'ploughing, farming'; āl 'person']

ulavin pul āl (pati.15:12)
 'the lowly person, **with** (the task of) **ploughing**'

ceruppin ... kōvē (pati.21:23)
 [ceruppu 'foot-wear'; kō 'king']
 'O king, **wearing sandals** (foot-wear).'

palavin payam (narr.201:5)
 [palavu 'jack tree'; payam 'fruit, result']
 'the result/fruit **of the jack tree**'

atin varavu (pari.11:36)
 [atu 'it'; varavu 'arrival; increment; waxing']
 'its (the moon's) **enlargement/waxing**'

Pattern (b): X-iṇ Y, where Y is a part/relation of X; X subsumes Y.

paruntin irum ciṛaku (pati.12:19)
 [paruntu 'vulture'; ciṛaku 'wings']
 'the large wings **of the vulture**'

iraviṇ ellai (pura.366:12)
 [iravu ‘night’; ellai ‘limit’]
 ‘the limit of the night’

titiyiṇ ciṛār (pari.3:6)
 [titi ‘Titi, (a mythological character)’; ciṛār ‘children’]
 ‘the children of Titi’

tiruviṇ kaṇava (pari.3:90)
 [tiru ‘Prosperity’; kaṇavan ‘husband’]
 ‘O husband of Tiru (Prosperity).’

Pattern (c) X-iṇ Y, where X is a part of Y.

pūviṇ tāmarai (pati.23:23)
 [pū ‘flower’; tāmarai ‘lotus’]
 ‘the lotus, with flowers’

ārā uṭampiṇ nī (pari.5:55)
 [uṭampu body’; nī ‘you’]
 ‘you, with a (young) body, not fully developed’

Pattern (d) X-iṇ Y, where Y is specified for X.

karumpiṇ pātti (pati.13:3)
 [karumpu ‘sugarcane’; pātti ‘section’]
 ‘the sugarcane section’

kaḷḷiṇ cāṭi (narr.295:7)
 [kaḷ ‘toddy’; cāṭi ‘jar’]
 ‘jar of toddy’

Pattern (e) X-iṇ Y, where Y is made of X.

muttiṇ āram (aka.13:1)

[**muttu** ‘pearls’; **āram** ‘garland, string’]
‘a string of pearls’

(ii) accusative

naṛaviṇ vāltti (pura.297:6)

[**naṛavu** ‘liquor’; **vālttu** ‘to praise’]
‘praising the liquor’

(iii) instrumental: ‘with; by; as a result of; because of’

kēḷalāy maruppiṇ ulutōy (pari.3:24)

[**maruppu** ‘tusks’; **ulu** ‘plough’]
‘You, who ploughed with (your) tusks, in the form of a boar.’

mālai muḷakkiṇ māṇkaṇam paṇippa (pati.50:1)

[**muḷakku** ‘roaring’; **paṇi** ‘to tremble’]
‘as the herd of deer tremble because of the mountain’s roaring’

punaliṇ karai kār ēṇṇaru (pari.12:98)

[**punal** ‘water, flood’; **kār** ‘winter’; **ēl** ‘to accept, receive’]
‘the shore acquired the quality of winter because of the water/flood’

(iv) associative: ‘to the accompaniment of’

muḷaviṇ varuvāy nī (pari.20:75)

[**muḷavu** ‘drums’; **var** ‘to come’]
‘You are arriving to the accompaniment of drums.’

(v) locative (spatial): ‘in; on; upon; into; together; between’

ceṛuvīṇ ... uruḷi ... maṇṭa (pati.27:10-11)

[**ceṛu** ‘field’; **maṇṭu** ‘to rush’]

‘as the wheels (of the chariot) **rush ... in the field**’

cāntiṇ toṭutta t̃intēṇ (narr.1:4)

[**cāntu** ‘sandalwood tree’; **toṭu** ‘to string, hang’]

‘the sweet honey **gathered on** the (branches of the) **sandalwood trees**’

kaṇṇiṇ uvantu (pati. 20:8)

[**kaṇ** ‘eyes’; **uva** ‘to be delighted’]

‘delighted **by** (what) **the eyes** (see)’

‘showing the joy **in the eyes**’

āyattiṇ kūṭu (pari.11:113)

[**āyatt** oblique of **āyam** ‘group of companions’; **kūṭu** ‘to join’]

‘Join (together **with**) the **group** of your companions.’

veriniṇ ... ēriṇāḷ (pari.12:48)

[**verin** ‘back’; **ēru** ‘to climb up’]

‘She climbed **on the back** (of the elephant).’

keṭu vaḷai pūṇṭavaḷ mēṇiyiṛ kaṇṭu (pari.20:34)

[**mēṇi** ‘body’; **kaṇṭu** advp < **kāṇ** to see’]

‘She saw the lost bangle on the **body** of the woman wearing it, and ...’

(vi) locative (temporal/action)

cēkkaiyuḷ pāyaliṇ aṛiyāy nī puṭai peyarvāy āyiṇum (kali.10:10-11)

[**pāyal** ‘sleep’; **puṭai peyar** ‘to roll over’]

‘even if you would roll over inadvertently **while sleeping** in the bed’

maraiyiṇiṇ maṇantu (kali.53:8)

[**maraiyiṇ** oblique of **marai** ‘secrecy’; **maṇa** ‘to marry’]
‘marrying **in secrecy**’

(vii) ablative: ‘from; as source’

ninṇiṇ piriyaḷen (kali.21:7)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **piri** ‘to part with, separate’]
‘I will not depart **from you**.’

ninṇiṇ viṭāa niḷal¹² (kali.61:8)

[**ninṇiṇ** oblique of **nin**, oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **viṭu** ‘to let go; leave’]
‘the shadow which does not leave **you**’

karpiṇiṇ vaḷāa (aka.86:13)

[**karpu** ‘virtue’; **vaḷu** ‘to swerve’]
‘without swerving **from virtue**’

malaiyiṇ iḷi aruvi (pari.16:32)

[**malai** ‘mountain’; **iḷi** ‘to descend’]
‘the waterfall which flows **from the mountain**’

meyyiṇ pirittu (pari.5:57)

[**mey** ‘body’; **piri** ‘to part with, separate’]
‘removing (a part) **from** (his) **body**’

¹² In modern Tamil, it is **ninnai** viṭā(ta).

mutanmaiṇ iḱanta kālam (pari.13:24-25)
 [mutanmai ‘primordial’; iḱa ‘to exceed, move away, transcend’]
 ‘time which has transcended the primordial’

(x) comparative: ‘like; as’

nilam nīr vaḷi vicumpu eṇṇa nāṇḱiṇ aḷappu ariyaiyē (pati.14:1-2)
 [nāṇḱu ‘four’; aḷappu ‘measuring’; aru ‘to be difficult’]
 ‘You are difficult to be measured like the four such as the earth,
 the water, the wind, and the sky.’

matiyiṇ viḷaṅku mukattār (kali.62:14)
 [mati ‘moon’; viḷaṅku ‘to shine’]
 ‘those (women) whose faces shine like the moon’

paṇṭaiyiṇ pāṛāṭṭi (kali.14:7)
 [paṇṭai ‘the past’; pāṛāṭṭu ‘to praise’]
 ‘praising, as in the past’

(ix) comparative: ‘more than’

itanṇiṇ koṭiyatu piṇṇitu oṇṇu illai (narr.322:2)
 [itan oblique of itu ‘this one’; koṭu ‘cruel’]
 ‘There is nothing more cruel than this (one).’

ninnṇiṇ ciṇanta niṇ tāḷ iṇai (pari.4:62)
 [niṇ oblique of nī ‘you’; ciṇa ‘to excel, surpass, be eminent’]
 ‘your feet which are more eminent than yourself’

(x) distributive

nāḷiṇ nāḷiṇ ... nilavu p parantāṅku¹³ (pari.11:32-33)

¹³ In modern Tamil, it is nāḷukku nāḷ.

[**nāḷ** ‘day’; **para** ‘to spread’]
 ‘as the moon’s light **spread** (wider) **day by day**’

kārikai matu **oruvarin** **oruvar** kaṇṇin kavarpura¹⁴ (pari.11:68)
 [**oruvar** ‘one person’]
 ‘as they experienced the delight of each other’s beauty **with/through**
each other’s eyes’

(xi) directional: ‘toward’

Īra c **ceṟuvin** vittotu **cenra** vaṭṭi (narr.210:2-3)
 [**ceṟu** ‘field’; **cel** ‘to go’]
 ‘the shallow bowl which **went** (i.e., was taken) **toward** the damp
field’

viḷavin **celiyyar** vēṇṭum (narr.390:6)
 [**viḷavu** ‘festival’; **cel** ‘to go’]
 ‘You must go **to the festival**.’

(xii) adverb of manner

(when suffixed to a neuter adjectival noun ending with
tu)

cevvitin naṭantu (pati.22:8)
 [**cevvitu** ‘that which is perfect’; **naṭa** ‘to behave’]
 ‘**behaving in the right manner**’

vālitin nūlin ilaiyā nuṇ mayir ilai (pati.39:9)
 [**vālitu** ‘that which is white’; **ilai** ‘to fabricate’]
 ‘fine hair-like web that was **not fabricated in white** thread’

¹⁴ In later Tamil, it is **oruvarukku** **oruvar** ‘between one another.’

viruntin vāḷkkai (pati.71:19)
 [viruntu ‘strangeness’; vāḷkkai ‘life; living’]
 ‘strange life’; ‘living in a strange manner’

initinin puṇarkkuveṇ maṇṇō (aka.263:13)
 [initu ‘that which is pleasant, sweet, nice’; puṇar ‘to join’]
 ‘I would have made them join (with each other) nicely.’
 (Notice that the **in** is repeated in **initinin** < **initu** + **in** + **in**. The first one following the stem can be taken as the oblique marker.)

uṭan¹⁵: It is added to a nominal. It also precedes a verb to function like an adverb giving the sense ‘altogether’ or ‘immediately.’

(i) ‘all over’

yāṇai **kāṭuṭan** niṟaitara (narr.324:4)
 [kāṭu ‘forest, jungle’; niṟaitara ‘to fill up’]
 ‘as the elephants filled/occupied **all over the forest**’

nāṭu **uṭan** viḷaṅkum ... nallicai (pati.24:10)
 [nāṭu ‘country’; viḷaṅku ‘to shine’]
 ‘good fame which **shines all over the country**’

(ii) associative: ‘together with; along with’

iḷaiyarum mutiyarum **kiḷaiyuṭan** kuḷīi (narr. 207:7)
 [kiḷai ‘clan’; kuḷu ‘to gather’]
 ‘the young and the old, gathering **together with their clan**’

¹⁵ It has a variant **uṭaṅku**: **uṭaṅku** amar ayam ‘group of companions who abide together’ (pari.19:105).

araicanōṭu uṭaṇ māynta ... celvam pōl (kali.130:4)

[aracan 'king'; ṭu case marker 'with'; uṭaṇ 'together'; māy 'to perish']

'like the wealth which perished **together with the king**'

āyattuṭaṇ nillāl (pari.11:111)

[āyatt oblique of āyam 'group of companions'; nil 'to stay']

'she, without staying **with the group** of her companions'

(iii) inclusive: 'altogether; entire'

col peyar nāṭṭam kēlvi neṇcam eṇṇu aintu uṭaṇ pōrri (pati. 21:1-2)

[uṭaṇ 'altogether'; pōrru 'to appreciate']

'**appreciating altogether** (the merit of) words, reputation, goal, listening, and heart'

ūr uṭaṇ iravalarkku aruḷi t tēr uṭaṇ mullaikku itta ... pāri

(pura.201:2-3, 5)

[ūr 'town'; tēr 'chariot'; uṭaṇ 'entire'; aruḷ 'to bestow';

ī 'to give']

'Pāri, who gave away **altogether the towns** to the suppliants and (his) **chariot** to the jasmine vine'

(iv) 'immediately; soon'

namar koṭai nērntaṇar āyiṇ avar uṭaṇ nērvar kol (narr.393:10-11)

[uṭaṇ 'immediately'; nēr 'to agree']

'If our relatives agree to give me away (in marriage), will he **agree** (to it) **immediately**?'

uṭai(ya): It is added to a nominal.

(genitive/possessive)

muttu uṭai maruppu (*pati.32:3*)
 [muttu ‘pearls’; maruppu ‘tusks’]¹⁶
 ‘tusks with pearls’

ninnuṭai vāḷkkai (*pati.37:1*)
 [nin oblique of nī ‘you’; vāḷkkai ‘life’]
 ‘your life’

cīr uṭaiya ilai (*puṛa.11:13*)
 [cīr ‘beauty’; ilai ‘ornaments’]
 ‘ornaments which have beauty’
 ‘beautiful ornaments’

umpar: It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘yonder’)

vēṅkaṭattu umpar (*aka.209:9*)
 [vēṅkaṭatt oblique of vēṅkaṭam ‘Vēṅkaṭa hills’; umpar ‘beyond’]
 ‘beyond the Vēṅkaṭam’

uḷi: It is added to a nominal, non-past/non-completive stem, or past/completive stem.

(locative [temporal]: ‘when’)

vēṅkai koykuvam cenruḷi (*aka.48:6*)

¹⁶ The pearls here are not the pearls from oysters. They must be some hard growth in the tusk.

[**cenr** past/completive stem < **cel** 'to go']
 'when we went to pick vēṅkai (flowers)'

viyal nakar **celvuḷi c celvuḷi** (aka.49:14-15)
 [**celv** non-past/non-completive stem < **cel** 'to go']
 'whenever (she) moves around the large house'

(locative [spatial]: 'where')

yāṇum urai **kēṭpuḷi-y-ellām celvēṇ** (kali.146:29-30)
 [**kēṭp** non-past/non-completive stem < **kēḷ** 'to hear']
 'I will go to (all those places) wherever I hear about his presence.'

uḷai: It is added to a nominal; it means 'nearby.'

(i) locative (spatial): 'to'

avanuḷai k kūuy k kūuy (kali.63:6)
 [**avan** 'he'; **kū** 'to call out']
 'calling out (again and again) to him'

(ii) directional: 'to; toward'

kēḷiruḷai c cenru (kali.61:3)
 [**kēḷir** 'companions'; **cel** 'to go']
 'going to (his) companions'

ennuḷai vantu (kali.77:15)
 [**en** oblique of **yāṇ** 'I'; **var** 'to come']
 'coming near me'

uḷ: It means ‘in, inside.’ It is added to a nominal. When the nominal signifies plurality, the **uḷ** helps to single out an item from a group.

(i) locative (spatial): ‘inside; through’ (when followed by a verb of motion); ‘among’ (when added to a plural noun)

kaliṅkattuḷ (kali.69:3)

[**kaliṅkatt** oblique of **kaliṅkam** ‘clothing’]
‘inside (her) clothing’

nāṟṟam uḷḷuḷ karantu (pari.7:21)

[**uḷ** ‘inside’; **uḷḷuḷ** ‘inside of inside’; **kara** ‘to hide’]
‘hiding the fragrance **deep inside**’

avaruḷ orutti (pari.7:53)

[**avar** oblique of **avar** ‘they’; **orutti** ‘one woman’]
‘one woman **among them**’

iraṇṭinuḷ onru (pura.344:3)

[**iraṇṭin** oblique of **iraṇṭu** ‘two’; **onru** ‘one thing’]
‘one of the two’

nammuḷ nakutal (kali.94:35)

[**nam** oblique of **nām** ‘we’; **naku** ‘to laugh, rejoice’]
‘rejoicing **between us**’

irappōr kaiyuḷum pōki ... pulavar nāvil ceṇru vīḷntaṇru avan aru
niṟattu iyaṅkiya vēlē (pura.235:11-15)

[**kai** ‘hands’]

‘The spear which bounced on his chest also went **through the hands of the suppliants** and fell on the poets’ tongues (who sing of him).’

(ii) locative (temporal/action): ‘in; at the time of’

kaṇaviṇuḷ uṟaiyum ... arivai (pati.19:13-14)

[**kaṇavu** ‘dream’; **uṟai** ‘to stay still’]
‘the woman who **lives in** (my) **dreams**’

ōr irā vaikaluḷ (kali.5:14)

[**vaikal** ‘time, stay’; **irā** ‘night’]
‘**during one night**’

celvattuḷ cērntu (kali.25:19)

[**celvam** ‘wealth, prosperity’; **cēr** ‘to join, unite’]
‘uniting with (someone) **at the time of** (his) **prosperity**’

viḷaviṇuḷ viḷaiyāṭum poḷutu (kali.35:14)

[**viḷavu** ‘festival’; **viḷaiyāṭu** ‘to play’]
‘when **playing at the festival**’

(iii) associative: ‘with’

nīyē **ennuḷ varutiyō** ... ciṟu kuṭiyāṇē (narr.82:2-3, 11)

[**en** oblique of **yān** ‘I’; **var** ‘to come’]
‘**Will you come with me** to (our) small neighborhood?’

uḷḷum: It is basically **uḷ** ‘inside’ + **um** ‘and, even, also.’ It is added to a nominal, and serves to single out an item from a group when added to a plural noun.

(‘amongst; among all ...’)

vicumpu vaḷaṅku **makaḷiruḷḷum ciṟanta** cemmīṇ (pati.31: 27-28)

[**makaḷir** ‘women’; **ciṟa** ‘to be eminent, illustrious’]
‘Cemmīṇ (the star Aruntati) who is illustrious **among all celestial women**’

ellāruḷḷum niṇṇal icai mikumē (pati.38:2)
 [ellār ‘all people’; miku ‘to surpass, exceed’]
 ‘Your fine reputation surpasses **among all** the (wealthy) people.’

yām kūriya aintaṇuḷḷum (pari.13:17)
 [aintaṇ oblique of aintu ‘five’]
 ‘**among the five** (elements) I stated earlier’

uḷi: It is added to a nominal.

(adverb of manner)

perum peyar **muraiyūḷi** p perṛa putalvaṇ (kali.75:24-25)
 [murai ‘custom, relationship, turn’; peru ‘to get, obtain’]
 ‘the son who got the great name (of his grandfather) **by relation**’

marapuḷi p pāṭi (kali.103:75)
 [marapu ‘convention’; pāṭu ‘to sing’]
 ‘(we) singing **according to the convention**’

u(ḷ)ē: It is **uḷ** ‘inside’ + **ē** case marker/particle, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘inside’)

veṇ muttam ... **nīruḷē pīrappinūm** nīrkku avi tām eṇ ceyyum (kali.9:15-16)
 [nīr ‘water’; pīra ‘to be born’]
 ‘**Although they are born** in the water, what can the white pearls do for **the water**?’

uḷḷē kaṇalum uḷḷam (aka.305:14)
 [kaṇal ‘to burn’; uḷḷam ‘heart, mind’]
 ‘my heart which is fuming **inside**’

ūṅkaṇ: It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle. It means ‘yonder.’

(locative [spatial]: ‘yonder’)

uyar **varaikku ūṅkaṇ** aṭtu em ūr (aka.38:16-17)

[**varai** ‘mountain’; **ūṅkaṇ** < **ūṅkaṇ** ‘yonder’]¹⁷

‘Our town is **beyond / on the other side of** the tall **mountain.**’

(An example of a postposition [**ūṅkaṇ**] following a noun in its dative form.)

(locative [temporal]: ‘then’)

iṭū ūṅkaṇ iṇiya paṭūum (narr.246:1)

[**iṭu** ‘to be narrow’; **ūṅkaṇ** ‘then’; **iṭū ūṅkaṇ** ‘now and then; often’]

‘pleasant things befall **often / now and then**’

ūṅku: It is added to a nominal or a negative adjectival participle.

(locative [temporal]: ‘at; before; till; until’)

tāṇai **paravā ūṅkē** (pati. 29:15)

[**paravā** negative adjp of **paravu** ‘to spread’;

ūṅkē < **ūṅku** + **ē** particle]

‘**before** the army **spread**’

aṇṇai ṇāṇṇiṇoṭu **inṇin ūṅkum** (puṇa.376:17)

[**inṇin** oblique of **inru** ‘today’]

¹⁷ It is possible to analyze **uyar varaikku ūṅkaṇ** as **uyar varai-k-ūṅkaṇ** ‘at a calling distance from the tall hills.’ Compare **ūṅkaṇ** and **āṅkaṇ**.

‘from that day **to this day**’

(Note that it is a “from X to Y” type of construction.)

ūtu: It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘through’)

pal kāl ... nuṇ **tukil ūtu** vantu **imaikkum** ... alkul (*narr.366:1-3*)

[**tukil** ‘fine/nice cloth’; **imai** ‘to glitter, twinkle’]

‘her pelvic region where the many strands (of her waist ornament) **glitter through her fine cloth**’

ūl: It is added to a nominal.

(repetitive: ‘times’)

pal **ūl** ... eṇṇai **nōkkum**

(*kali.61:5*)

[**pal** ‘many’; **nōkku** ‘to look at’]

‘He would **look at me many times**.’

etir(ē): It is added to a nominal; it means ‘in front of.’

(locative [spatial]: ‘in front of’)

iraiñcuka peruma niṇ ceṇṇi ... muṇivar ēntu **kai etirē** (*puṛa.6:19-20*)

[**kai** ‘hand(s)’; **iraiñcu** ‘to bow, stoop, hang’]

‘Lord, may your head bow **in front of the raised hands** of the ascetics.’

(locative [temporal]: ‘in response to; in sequence’)

ī eṇa irattal ilintanru **atan etir** īyēṇ **enral** ataninum ilintanru

(*puṛa.204:1-2*)

[**atan** oblique of **atu** ‘that one’; **en** ‘to say’]

‘It is lowly to beg. **Thereupon**, it is lowlier to respond “I will not give.” ’

ellai: It means ‘limit.’ It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle.

(temporal limitation: ‘at the time; during; in the end; until’)

nerunal ellai nĩ erintōn

(*pura.300:3*)

[**nerunal** ‘yesterday’; **eri** ‘to toss, destroy’]

‘the man whom you tossed/destroyed **yesterday**’

ñāyirru ellai ālvinaikku utavi iravin ellai varuvatu nāṭi

(*pura.366:11-12*)

[**ñāyirru** oblique of **ñāyiru** ‘sun’; **iravin** oblique of **iravu** ‘night’; **utavu** ‘to help’; **nāṭu** ‘to seek, look for’]

‘**providing help at the time of day(light)** for the task of ruling (the country), and **looking for what is forthcoming at the time of night**’

‘engaging oneself in ruling the country at daybreak and watching for what is forthcoming by nightfall’

nannāl talaivarum ellai ... tam nāṇ tām tāṅkuvār (*kali.39:31-32*)

[**talaivaru** ‘to come forth’; **tāṅku** ‘to contain, hold’]

‘**those who would control their coyness until the good day (of our wedding) arrives**’

ē: It is added to a nominal. See also “The Particles.”

(i) accusative¹⁸

poṇ puṇai uṭukkaiyōṇ puṇarntu amar **nilaiyē** niṇaimiṇ (*pari.15:28-29*)
[**nilai** ‘state of being’; **niṇai** ‘to think’;

poṇ puṇai uṭukkaiyōṇ ‘the one with a golden garb; Tirumāl; Vishnu’]

‘Think of His (the one with a golden garb) **state of being** together (with His brother).’

peyalē pōl (*kali.55:1*)

[**peyal** ‘clouds’; **pōl** ‘like’]

‘**like the** (rain) **clouds**’

tīri umiḷ **neyyē pōl** teṇ paṇi uṇaikkum kāl (*kali.15:21*)

[**ney** ‘oil’; **pōl** ‘like’]

‘when (her) eyes get cloudy with cool tears like **the oil** which the wick drops’

aṇiyalanē ... māṇṇōr tēettu **māriya viṇaiyē** (*pati.20:6-7*)

[**māru** ‘to change’; **viṇai** ‘action’]

‘He does not know **retreat** from the enemies’ lands.’

‘He does not know how **to retreat** from the enemies’ lands.’

uṇmiṇ **kaḷḷē** aṭumiṇ **cōrē** (*pati.18:1*)

[**kaḷ** ‘toddy’; **cōru** ‘rice’]

‘Drink **the toddy**. Cook **the rice**.’

(ii) locative (spatial): ‘in; at; through’

aḷātīmō notumalar **talaiyē** (*narr.13:2*)

¹⁸ Some might not consider the **ē** in this group of examples as a case marker, but would rather treat it as an emphatic particle. Note that in modern Tamil, the accusative marker **ai** occurs in such contexts: e.g., **nilaiyai** niṇaiyunkaḷ; **peyalai** p pōl; **neyyai** p pōl.

[**talai** ‘place’; **alu** ‘to cry, weep’]

‘Do not cry **in this place** that belongs to strangers.’

i-v-vaṇanilai āṛē

(*puṛa.263:4*)

[**āru** ‘river’]

‘**through** this drying up **river**’

pakalē emmoṭu āṭi **iravē** ... nal il nōyoṭu vaikuti āyiṇ (*aka.370:4-6*)

[**pakal** ‘day’; **āṭu** ‘to play’; **iravu** ‘night’; **vaiku** ‘to stay’]

‘if you would **play** with me **during the day** and **stay at night** in your good house with (love)sickness, ...’

iṛaiṇcuka peruma niṇ ceṇṇi ciṛanta nāṇ maṛai muṇivar ēntu kai
etirē (*puṛa.6:19-20*)

[**etir** ‘in front’]

‘May your head bow **in front of** the raised hands of the noble and the learned who are well versed in the four Secrets/Vedas.’

(iii) vocative

kaṭuñ-ciṇa **vēntē**

(*pati.30:44*)

‘**King** with intense anger.’

pāṭiṇi **vēntē**¹⁹

(*pati.17:14*)

‘**King** of female singers.’

¹⁹ It is also the end of the poem.

(iv) adverb of manner

paṇṇi ... mella mella p **piṛakkē** **peyarntu** (narr.98:2, 6)
 [piṛakku ‘back’; peyar ‘to move’]
 ‘the pig, moving **backward** very slowly, ...’,²⁰

ai²¹: It is added to a nominal.

(i) accusative: (direct object + **ai**)

turaivanai nīyē collal vēṇṭumāl (aka.170:7, 8)
 [turaivan ‘man from the shore-land’; col ‘to tell, inform, reveal’]
 ‘You have to **inform the man from the shore-land.**’

koṭicciyai ... koṇṭanai cenmō (aka.132:7-8)
 [koṭicci ‘mountain girl/woman’; koḷ ‘to take’]
 ‘**Take the Koṭicci** (mountain girl) and go.’

veḷḷivītiyai p pōla (aka.147:9)
 ‘**like Veḷḷivīti**’

orūpa ninnai (pati.34:1)
 [nin oblique of nī ‘you’; oru ‘to shun’]
 ‘**They shun you.**’

vēḷai nī munniya ticai (malai:94)
 [vēḷ ‘chieftain’; munnu ‘to place in front, to intend’]
 ‘the direction in which you go **thinking about the Vēḷ** (chieftain)’

²⁰ This could be interpreted as a locative.

²¹ A variety of examples is given in order to provide a broad sense of the use of this marker.

cenrōrai c colli k kāṭṭi²² (malai:78-79)

[**cenrōr** 'those who went'; **col** 'to tell, reveal, inform']

'informing those who went (to his land) and making them see (things)'

nāṭanai varūum eṇrōl (narr:65:9)

'She said that **the Nāṭan** will come.'

ninnai inṇaṇ eṇru uraittal (pari:1:31-32)

'saying that **you** are of this nature'

'to say that you are like this'

ūraṇai p pulattal kūṭumō (aka:26:4, 5)

[**pula** 'to sulk']

'Is it possible to sulk **with the Ūraṇ**?''

cērppanai yāṇum kāṭalen yāyūm naṇi veyyaḷ (kuru:51:3-4)

[**cērppan** 'the man from the shore-land';

kāṭalen 'one who has love']

'**I love the Cērppan**. My mother also likes him very much.'

kaḷi t turappōrai ... vaṭṭu viṭṭu eṇivōr²³ (pari:11:54-55)

[**kaḷi** 'bamboo stick'; **eṇi** 'to toss, destroy']

'those who chase/destroy the people, who are rushing (across the water) with the help of bamboo sticks, by flinging water bags (at them)'

²² In modern Tamil, it would be **cenrōrukku** c colli ...

²³ In modern Tamil, it would be **turappōr mēl** vaṭṭu viṭṭu eṇivōr 'those who fling water bags on those who are rushing.' An excellent example illustrating a change in the interpretation of the verb **eṇi**.

uppai māri veṇṇel tarīiya²⁴ (kurū.269:5)

[**uppu** ‘salt’; **māru** ‘change, exchange’]

‘in order to bring white paddy by **exchanging salt** (with the paddy)’

kaciṇai anna ... kaṇi (kurū.274:2)

[**kācu** ‘coin’; **kaṇi** ‘fruit(s)’]

‘**fruits which are like coins**’

(Note that the case marker **ai** is added to the oblique stem **kācin**.)

innatai ... ikuḷaikku uṇarttu (narr.71:1-2)

[**innatu** ‘this one; one of this nature’; **uṇarttu** ‘to make understand’]

‘**Make your friend understand this one.**’

vēlattai iṇṇu kaṇṭāy pōl (kali.97:20-21)

[**vēlam** ‘elephant’; **kaṇṭāy** < **kāṇ** ‘to see’]

‘as if you **encountered the elephant** today’

ampalai nāṇi (kali.3:1)

[**ampal** ‘rumour’; **nāṇ(u)** ‘to be embarrassed; be coy’]

‘**embarrassed about the (town’s) rumour**’

kalilai ... antaṇar kalaṅkiṇar maruṇṭu (pari.6:44-45)

[**kalil** ‘muddied water’; **kalaṅku** ‘to be agitated, confused, puzzled’]

‘the brahmins **were puzzled by the muddied water**’

taṅkarum kāmattai t taṇantu (kali.121:7)

[**kāmam** ‘passion’; **taṇa** ‘to give up’]

‘**giving up the unbearable passion**’

²⁴ This one and a few other examples that follow show that the accusative marker **ai** is suffixed to neuter nouns also.

(ii) (internal object + ai)

ninnai p purai **ninaippin**²⁵ (pari.3:46)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** 'you'; **ninai** 'to think, consider']
'if one were to **think** of a comparison **to you**'

ninnai ampuli **kāṭṭal** initu²⁶ (kali.80:18-19)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** 'you'; **kāṭṭu** 'to show']
'It is nice to **show** the moon **to you**.'

avanai ... munnir vaḷākam ellām ... **nāyirrai** **nāṭu enrēn**
(kali.146:27-29)

[**avan** 'he'; **nāyir** oblique of **nāyiru** 'sun';
nāṭu 'to seek, search, look for']

'I told the sun to look for him all over the fertile land enclosed by the ocean.'

(Note the double accusative: **avanai** and **nāyirrai**.)

oṭu, **ōṭu**²⁷: It is added to a nominal.

(i) genitive

kūntal ennum peyaroṭu kūntal eri ciṇam koṇṇōy (pari.3:31-32)

[**peyar** 'name']

'O you who destroyed/demolished the anger of (the demon) Kūntal (Keśi) **with the name** kūntal.'

²⁵ In modern Tamil, it would be **ninakku** oppumai (i.e., purai) ninaittāl.

²⁶ In modern Tamil, it would be **ninakku** ... kāṭṭal.

²⁷ In most cases, **ōṭu** precedes a vowel, while **oṭu** precedes either a vowel or a consonant.

(ii) accusative

cērppaṇoṭu maṇavā ūṅkē (narr.31:12)

[**cērppaṇ** ‘the man from the shore-land’; **maṇa** ‘to marry’]
‘before marrying the **Cērppaṇ**’

kātal nammoṭu nīṅkā māṛu (narr.231:9)

[**nam** oblique of **nām** ‘we’; **nīṅku** ‘to leave’]
‘because (the) love (he gave us) **did not leave us**, ...’

poykaiyōṭu okkum niṇ kuṇṇiṇ ... cuṇai²⁸ (pari.8:15-16)

[**poykai** ‘pond’; **o** ‘to resemble’]
‘The spring in your hill **resembles the pond** (on the Himalayas).’

(iii) associative: There is more than one subject or one object,
but there is only one verb. The meaning is ‘along with;
together with; altogether’, or ‘and.’

nōyoṭu paci ikantu (pati.13:27)

[**nōy** ‘sickness’; **paci** ‘hunger’]
‘having gone beyond / removed from **hunger and sickness**’

kaṭaloṭu pulampuvōl (kali.144:68)

[**kaṭal** ‘ocean’]
‘she who cries **along with the ocean**’

maṭantaiyoṭu vatuvai ayaṛntaṇai (aka.36:11-12)

[**maṭantai** ‘naive woman’]
‘You celebrated your wedding **with the naive woman**.’

²⁸ In modern Tamil, it would be **poykaiyai okkum**.

māa meyyoṭu muraṇiya uṭukkaiyai (pari.4:8)

[mey 'body']

'You have/wear a (golden) garment which conflicts **with** (your) tawny body.'

vēroṭu maram vempa (kali.9:4)

[vēr 'root'; maram 'trees']

'as the trees lost their sap **altogether from the roots**'

avaṇoṭu māru uṇṭō ... namakku (kali.62:18-19)

[avan 'that) he']

'Is there (any) difference (of opinion) **between him** and us?'

kaluḷum kaṇṇoṭu ... aḷintu evaṇ niṇaipu vāṭuti (narr.208:3)

[kaṇ 'eyes'; aḷi 'to perish']

'Thinking what, do you **perish along with** your tearful eyes and wilt?'

ivaḷōṭu ... vāliya (pati.21:37-38)

[ivaḷ '(this) she']

'May you prosper **together with her**.'

pōtu aviḷ marattōṭu ... karai kavin pera (kali.26:7)

[maratt oblique of maram 'trees'; kavin peru 'to attain abundant/fascinating beauty']

'as the river bank attained fascinating beauty **together with** the blooming trees'

vittoṭu cenra vaṭṭi paṇṇaḷa miṇoṭu peyarum (narr.210:3-4)

[vittu 'seeds'; cel 'to go'; miṇ 'fish'; peyar 'to return']

'where the basket which **left with seeds returns with** many kinds of fish'

‘the town, where the basket of seeds which was taken by the seller comes back filled with fish’

(iv) instrumental: ‘by; with the help of; through; because of’

nāvoṭu navilā nakai paṭu tiñcol (aka.16:4)
 [nā ‘tongue’; **navil** ‘to practice’]
 ‘sweet funny words (of the child) which are **not practiced** (well) **by the tongue**’

maḷaikkaṇṇār kai vaḷam ... **vaṭuvoṭu kāṇāy** nī (pari.18:16-17)
 [vaṭu ‘scar’; **kāṇ** ‘to see, find out’]
 ‘See the generous embracing of lovely-eyed women **through the scars** (on his body).’

kaṭum cūl **vayavoṭu** kāṇal **eytātu** kaḷaṇi oḷinta ... pēṭai (narr.263:5-6)
 [vayavu ‘ailment due to pregnancy’; **eytu** ‘to reach’]
 ‘the female (crane) which resorted to the field **without going into** the banks of the backwaters **because of the ailment** of advanced pregnancy’

kāloṭu paṭṭa māri (narr.2:9)
 [kāl ‘wind’; **paṭu** ‘to fall down’]
 ‘the rain which **came down/scattered because of the wind**’

nōyoṭu pullenra nutal (kali.3:4)
 [nōy ‘sickness, ailment’; **pul en** ‘to lose luster/life’]
 ‘(her) forehead which has **lost its shine because of** (love)sickness’

piṇi koḷḷum **kaṇṇoṭu** ... nī pū p **pali viṭṭa** kaṭavuḷ (kali.93:23-24)
 [kaṇ ‘eyes’; **pali viṭu** ‘to make an offering’]
 ‘the goddess for whom you made an offering of flowers **due to** (her) ensnaring eyes’

pōtu aviḷ **marattōṭu** ... karai **kaviṇ** **peṛa** (kali.26:7)
 [maratt oblique of maram 'trees';
 kaviṇ **peṛu** 'to attain fascinating beauty']
 'as the river bank attained fascinating beauty **because of the** blooming
trees'

(v) dative: indirect object

ittalai **ninnoṭu** **viṇaval** (aka.7:16-17)
 [nin oblique of nī 'you'; viṇa 'to enquire']
 'I shall ask you now.'

emmoṭu **collalum** **paḷiyō**²⁹ (kuri:144-145)
 [em oblique of yām 'we'; col 'to tell, inform, reveal']
 'Is it wrong even to tell me?'

peruntakaiyōṭu **evaṇ** **pala** **moḷikuvam** (kali.5:8)
 [peruntakai 'great one'; moḷi 'to say']
 'How can we say many things to the Great One?'
 [nin oblique of nī 'you']

ninnoṭu **teḷittanar** (narr.358:4)
 'He made it clear with you.'

(vi) locative (spatial): 'at; in'

koṭṭaiyoṭu **pukaḷ** **varampu** **ikantōy** (pari.5:70)
 [koṭṭai 'lotus bud; inside of a lotus'; ika 'to go beyond, go away']

²⁹ Cf. tuṇintaṇirkku oru poruḷ colluvatu uṭaiyēṇ (kali.8:7-8) 'I have something to say/reveal to you who have decided to ...', where kku is the case marker, not oṭu.

‘O you who **excelled** the limit of fame (even at your birth) **in the lotus bud.**’

(vii) enumerative: ‘thus; namely’

nilam nīr tī vaḷi vicumpōṭu aintum aḷantu (*pati.24:15-16*)

[**nilam** ‘earth’; **nīr** ‘water’; **tī** ‘fire’; **vaḷi** ‘wind’;

vicumpu ‘sky’; **aintu** ‘five’]

‘measuring all the five namely, the earth, the water, the fire, the wind, and the sky’

kurukoṭu peyar peṛṛa māl varai (*pari.5:9*)

[**kuruku** a name; **peyar** ‘name’; **peṛu** ‘to obtain’]

‘the big mountain which obtained its name (thus:) “**Kuruku**” ’

k(k)(u), akk(u), ukk(u):

(i) subject + **kk**

ninakkō aṛiyunaḷ neñcē³⁰ (*narr.44:5*)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **aṛi** ‘to know’]

‘O my heart, is she someone **known to you?**’

(ii) genitive

ninakku ... vaṇappu (*pari.3:48, 50*)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **vaṇappu** ‘beauty’]

‘**your beauty**’

mutumaikku ūḷi yāvarum uṇarā āti mutalva (*pari.2:17-19*)

[**mutumai** ‘antiquity, old age’; **ūḷi** ‘epoch, eon’]

³⁰ In modern Tamil, it is **unakku t teriyumā?** or **uṇ neñcukku t teriyumā?**

‘O Primordial One, the (innumerable) **eons of** whose **age/antiquity** no one knows.’

(iii) accusative (direct object)

nāṭar̥ku k kātal ceytal³¹ (narr.268:5-6)
 [nāṭaṇ ‘the man from the country-side’; kātal cey ‘to love’]
 ‘loving the Nāṭaṇ’

kuṭar **kūlikku ārttuvāṇ** (kali.101:26)
 [kūli ‘demon’; ārttu ‘to feed’]
 ‘he who feeds the Kūli-demon with the liver of the bull’

(iv) ‘because of; as a result of’

cērpparku yāṇ niṇaintu iraṅkēṇ (narr.275:6-7)
 [cērppaṇ ‘man from the shore-land’; iraṅku ‘to feel sorry’]
 ‘I will not think of the Cērppaṇ and be pitiful because of him.’

peyarvukku iraṅki (aka.147:13)
 [peyarvu ‘departure’; iraṅku ‘to feel sorry’]
 ‘feeling pitiful because of (his) departure’

(v) dative: ‘for; to’ (indirect object)

uraittiṇ **emakkē** (aka.200:14)
 [em oblique of yām ‘we’; urai ‘to tell’]
 ‘Tell me.’

tuṇintaṇirkku oru poruḷ colluvatu uṭaiyēṇ (kali.8:7-8)
 [tuṇi ‘to dare, determine’; col ‘to tell, reveal’]
 ‘I have something to tell you, who are determined (to leave).’

³¹ In modern Tamil, it would be *nāṭaṇai k kātalikkum*.

(Here, the dative **kku** governs the verb **uṭaiyēṇ** ‘I have’, not **colluvatu** ‘saying’; compare **emmoṭu collal** in *kuri:144-145*)

niṇakku oṇṇu kūruvām kēḷ iṇi (kali.55:5)

[**niṇ** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **kūru** ‘to state, say’]

‘Listen now. We (hon.) shall **say** something **to you**.’

ñālattu maṇṇuyirkku eñcātu ittu (pati.15:35-36)

[**uyir** ‘life-breath’; **ī** ‘to give, provide’]

‘**giving** relentlessly **to the** lives on earth’

nakaivarkku araṇam āki (pati.31:34)

[**nakaivar** ‘allies, friends’; **āku** ‘to become’]

‘**becoming** a shelter **for the** allies’

paḷi **namakku** eḷuka eṇṇāy (matu:204)

[**nam** ‘oblique of **nām** ‘we’; **eḷu** ‘to rise’]

‘You will not say “**May** the blame **be upon us**.”’

kuṛitta iṇṇam **niṇakku** evaṇ ariya (aka.2:10)

[**niṇ** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **aru** ‘to be rare’]

‘How can the intended pleasure be **rare for you** (to attain)?’

koṭitu eṇa niṇṇai yāṇ kaḷarutal vēṇṭumō ... **niṇakkē** (kali.100:21-23)

[**niṇ** ‘oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **koṭitu** ‘that which is bad’]

‘Do I have to chide you that this is **bad for you**?’

karumpu karu muka k **kaṇakku** aḷippōr (pari.19:39)

[**karumpu** ‘sugar cane’; **kaṇam** ‘group’; **aḷippōr** ‘those who give’]

‘**people who give sugar canes to the group** of black-faced monkeys’

(Note that the case marker **kku** is added directly to the non-oblique form **kaṇam**.)

(vi) 'for the sake of; in order to; in anticipation of'

piṛarkku eṇa vāḷti nī (pati.38:16)

[**piṛar** 'others'; **vāḷ** 'to live']

'You live only **for the sake of others.**'

amararkkā c ceṇṇa niṇ ...³² (pari.2:71)

[**amarar** 'gods, immortals'; **cel** 'to go']

'you(r) ... who went **for the sake of the gods**'

niṇ ... kaṇ civappu aṇcuvārku t tuṇi nīṅki āṭal toṭaṅku (pari.6:96-97)

[**aṇcu** to be afraid of'; **toṭaṅku** 'to start']

'Get over your anger and **start dancing for the sake of him who is afraid of** the fury of your eyes.'

poruṭku iṛatti (kali.10:12)

[**poruḷ** 'wealth, riches'; **iṛa** 'to depart, go away']

'You are **going away for the sake of wealth.**'

(vii) 'in exchange for'

vāḷaikku ... pāṇmakaḷ ... nelliṇ mukavai koḷḷāḷ ...

muttamoṭu naṅkalam perūm payaṅkeḷu vaippu (aka.126:8-13)

[**vāḷai** 'vāḷai fish'; **koḷ** 'to receive'; **peru** 'to get, obtain']

'the fruitful bounteous environment, where the fisherwoman does not take measures of paddy **in exchange for the vāḷai** fish, but gets good jewelry with pearls'

³² In modern Tamil, it would be **amararkkāka**.

(viii) ‘in response to; because of’

vāṭu pal akal ilai **kōṭaikku** oyyum ... (aka.143:4)

[**kōṭai** ‘west wind’; **oy** ‘to fall, scatter’]

‘the many big withering leaves fall and scatter **because of the kōṭai** wind ...’

vaṇ **peyaṛku** **aviṇta** painkoṭi mullai (aka.124:11)

[**peyal** ‘downpour’; **aviṇ** ‘to unfold’]

‘the fresh jasmine vine which **blossomed in response to the heavy rain**’

amarkku **etirnta** ... maṛavar (pati.22:20)

[**amar** ‘war’; **etir** ‘to face’]

‘warriors **who faced** / responded to **the war**’

kaṇ ... **onnātārku** **avaṇ** vēṇi **cēntu** (kali.57:9-11)

[**kaṇ** ‘eyes’; **onnātār** ‘enemies’; **cēntu** < **ce** ‘to turn red’]

‘Your **eyes turned red** like his spear which turns red in response to his **enemies**.’

ciritirku p peritu **uvantu** (puṛa.398:17)

[**ciritu** ‘small thing’; **uva** ‘to be delighted’]

‘(He) was much **delighted for a small thing**, and ...’

(ix) locative (spatial): ‘at; in’, ‘in between (when added to more than one noun in a series and followed by **um**)’

ataṇāl **taṅkiṇ** evaṇō ... em ... **ūrkkē** (narr.67:9-12)

[**taṅku** ‘to stay over’; **ūr** ‘town, place’]

‘Therefore, what if you **stay over in** our town?’

‘So, if you **stay**, what is it **to** our city?’

māṭakku eḷutu aṇi kaṭavuḷ (aka.167:14-15)

[**māṭam** ‘inlet of the wall’; **māṭakku** < **māṭam** + **kku**;

eḷutu ‘to write, paint, draw’]

‘god, **painted** and beautifying the **inlet of the wall**’

(Note that the case marker **kku** is added directly to the non-oblique form **māṭam**. Traditional derivation would be **māṭakku** < **māṭam** + **akku** augment + **kku**.)

kiḷaṅku maṇaṅku īṇra muḷai (aka.212:4-5)

[**maṇal** ‘sand’; **īṇ** ‘to give birth, release’]

‘the sprout which was **released** by the tuber **in the sand**’

paraṅkunṛṛkum ... vaiyaikkum ... kūṭaṅkum kaiyūḷ taṭumārṛam
naṇṛu (pari.17:43-46)

[**paraṅkunṛu** ‘the Paraṅkunṛu hill’; **vaiyai** ‘the river Vaiyai’;

kūṭal ‘Madurai’; **taṭumārṛam** ‘staggering, distribution’]

‘The **staggering** of rituals **between Paraṅkunṛu, Vaiyai, and Kūṭal** is nice.’

‘The rotation of rituals between Paraṅkunṛu, Vaiyai, and Kūṭal is nice.’

(x) locative (temporal): ‘at; in’

vāṭaikk p pirivōṛ maṭavar (narr.366:11-12)

[**vāṭai** ‘winter’; **piri** ‘to depart, separte’]

‘Those who depart **in the winter** are gullible.’

kōṭaikk ... malai vempa (kali.20:3-5)

[**kōṭai** ‘summer’; **vempu** ‘to lose freshness, wither’]

‘as the mountain loses its richness **in the summer**’

(xi) ‘befitting; appropriate for; in accordance with’

maṭantai ... **kuḷaikk**u **amartta** nōkkam (aka.3:16, 17)

[**kuḷai** ‘earrings’; **amar** ‘be equal to’]

‘the young woman’s glances which are just **right for her earrings**’

vāymaikku ērpa (narr.393:9)

[**vāy**mai ‘truth, reality’; ēl ‘to accept, be in accordance’]

‘in accordance with truth/reality’

aṇikku aṇi (kali.85:17)

[**aṇi** ‘beauty’]

‘beauty **appropriate for beauty**’

enakku **urittu** eṇṇāḷ niṇṇa eṇ ... aṇṇai (aka.145:21-22)

[**e**n oblique of **yān** ‘I’; **uri** ‘to deserve, be appropriate’]

‘my girl who stood up (in front of me) without saying “It is **for me**”’

emakku il (pati.39:2)

[**e**m oblique of **yām** ‘we’; **il** ‘to be non-existent’]

‘There is **nothing for us**.’

‘We do not have anything.’

nallatarkku uriyai (narr.16:3-4)

[**nallatu** ‘a good thing’; **uri** ‘to deserve, be appropriate’]

‘You are fit **for** (i.e., you deserve) **good things**.’

pal pukaḷ **kēṭṭa**rkku iṇitu (pati.12:8-9)

[**kēṭṭa** verbal noun < **kē** ‘to hear’; **iṇitu** ‘a sweet/pleasant thing’]

‘(your) many reputation is pleasant **for listening / to hear about**’

nakutarku onru (kali.23:5)
 [nakutal verbal noun < **naku** ‘to laugh’; **onru** ‘one thing, something’]
 ‘something fit for laughing about’

(xii) ‘responsible for’

aṇaṅkutarku yāṇ taṇ arival (kuru.337:4-5)
 [aṇaṅkutal verbal noun < aṇaṅku ‘to afflict’; ari ‘to know’]
 ‘I know her (as being responsible) for afflicting me.’

(xiii) adverb of manner

arumai **narku ariyinum** (pari.1:33)
 [narku ‘well < nal ‘good’; ari ‘to know’]
 ‘although we know well the difficulty of describing you’

(xiv) directional: ‘toward’ with a verb of motion

ūrku p pōvōy (nar.200:7)
 [ūr ‘town, home town’; pō ‘to go’]
 ‘You will go to your (home) town and ...’

ciru kali ēr uṇkaṇ **nīrku viṭtu ūmtāyum nī³³** (kali.97:26-27)
 [nīr ‘water’; viṭtu ‘to let go, release’]
 ‘You are the one who rode the elephant with small eyes and let it go toward the water (front).’

³³ Another possible interpretation: ‘You are the one who by leaving (her) let her beautiful ensnaring eyes weep; and the one who united with her (later).’

(xv) relational: 'to; concerning; in relation to;
with respect to'

vāliyōrku avan̄ **īlaiyan** (pari.2:20-21)

[vāli 'the White One; Balarāma'; īla 'young']

'He is younger **to Vāliyōn** (Balarāman).'

yārē **nī emakku** (narr.395:1)

[em oblique of yām 'we'; nī 'you']

'Who are **you to us**?'

amararkku mutalvan̄ (pari.3:53)

[amarar 'gods, immortals'; mutalvan̄ 'principal, chief']

'He is the **chief of gods**.'

aravu nuṅku **matiyinukku** ivaṇōr pōla (kuru.395:4)

[matiyin̄ oblique of mati 'moon'; ivaṇōr 'people here']

'like the **people here** (on earth) **and the moon** which is devoured
by the snake'

'how the people on earth respond to the eclipsed moon'

kaṭai: It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle; it means 'final,
last.'

(locative [spatial]; 'end; at')

purāṅkaṭai p pōyiṇāḷ (kali.115:12)

[purāṅkaṭai 'back of the house'; pō 'to go']

'She went to **the back** of the house.'

perum tēr ... em **mun̄ kaṭai** niṟi c ceṇṇiṇōṇē (narr.300:5-6)

[mun̄ kaṭai 'front of the house'; niṟu 'to make stand, establish,
park']

'He **parked** the big chariot **in front** of our house, and left.'

em iḷa nalam **irkaṭai oḷiya** c cēṟum (narr.295:7-9)
 [irkaṭai 'at the house'; oḷi 'to stay back']
 'We shall return (to our house) **so that** the loveliness of our youth
stays in the house.'

(locative [temporal]: 'when')

pullu maṟṟu evaṇō **anpu il-am-kaṭaiyē** (narr.174:11)
 [il 'not to exist'; anpu 'love']
 'But then, why the hug, **when there is no love?**'

ūr uṭaṇ **āṭum-kaṭai** (pari.7:76)
 [āṭum adjp < āṭu 'to bathe']
 '**when** all (the people) of the town **bathe** (in the river Vaiyai).'

tuvvāmai **vanta-k-kaṭai** (kali.22:22)
 [vanta adjp < var 'to come']
 '**when** (the misfortune of) renouncing **came**'

mēviṇum **mēvā-k-kaṭaiyum** aṭtellām nī aṟiti yāṇ aṭtu aṟikallēṇ (kali.62:3-4)
 [mēvā adjp < mēvu 'to unite']
 'When and **when not to unite** with me, you know all that. I do not
 know.'

kaṇ: It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle. Basically, it
 means 'place.'

(associative: 'with')

taṅkaṇ poru kaḷiṟu (kali.60:9)
 [taṅ oblique of tāṇ 'it'; poru 'to fight']
 'the male elephant which **fights with him**'

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; on; in; toward’)

teruvin̄kaṇ nin̄ru oruvaṇ kūṟum col (kali.60:24-25)

[**teruvin̄** oblique of **teru** ‘street’; **niḷ** ‘to stand’]

‘the words which a man says (while) **standing in the street**’

nin̄ **eruttin̄kaṇ** ... **vaṭu** (kali.71:15-16)

[**eruttu** ‘nape’; **vaṭu** ‘scars’]

‘the **scars on your nape**’

vēṟṟumai **eṇ kaṇṇō** ōrāti (kali.88:15)

[**eṇ** oblique of **yān** ‘I’; **ōr** ‘to think, remember’]

‘Do not **think of** any difference **towards me**.’

‘Do not think of me as a person with differences.’

yār-kaṇṇum (kali.10:3)

[**yār** who’]

‘**towards everyone/anyone**’

pin̄-n̄-in̄-kaṇ ... **alari** ... āralm̄iṇ̄ takai oppa (kali.64:2-4)

[**pin̄** ‘braided hair’; **alari** ‘flowers’; **āralm̄iṇ̄** ‘the Pleiades’]

‘The flowers **on** (her) **braided hair** resemble the beauty of the Pleiades, and ...’

(locative [temporal/action/state]: ‘at; when; during’)

maṭai **aṭaitta-k-kaṇṇum** (pari.6:82)

[**aṭaitta** adjp < **aṭai** ‘to block’]

‘even **when** the sluice is **blocked**’

ōrai ayarum aṭakkam **iḷ pōltin̄kaṇ** (kali.82:9-10)

[**iḷ** ‘to be non-existent’; **pōltin̄** oblique of **pōltu** ‘time’]

‘**at the uncontrolled time when** (he) played (with the) **ōrai** (doll)’

toṭaṅkaṅkaṇ (kali.2:1)
 [toṭaṅku ‘to begin’; toṭaṅkal (verbal noun) ‘beginning’]
 ‘in the beginning’

nalaṇ uṭaiyār moḷikkaṇ (kali.22:6)
 [moḷi ‘words’]
 ‘in the words of the lovely ones’

pāṭi niṇṇa paci nāl kaṇṇē (pura.237:2)
 [paci nāl ‘days of hunger’]
 ‘during those hungry days when (I) stood (at his door) singing
 (praises of him)’

kāl(ai): It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; in’)

ūr-k-kāl nivanta potumpar (kali.56:1)
 [ūr ‘town’; nivanta adjp < niva ‘to grow high, stand high’]
 ‘the grove which stands high in the town’

(locative [temporal]: ‘at; times’)

nī ōr yāṭṭu oru-kāl varavu (kali.71:25-26)
 [oru ‘one’]
 ‘your arrival/visit once in a year’

putu p puṇal pal-kāl-um āṭiya celvuḷi (kali.98:34-35)
 [pal ‘many’]
 ‘when (you) go for bathing many times in the fresh (river) water’

eṇakkē paṭuṅ-kāl paiyuḷ tīrum (narr. 209:6-7)
 [paṭum adjp < paṭu ‘to die, fall down’]
 ‘When I die, my sufferings will be over.’

tiṇi nilam **kaṭanta-k-kāl** (pari.3:54)

[**kaṭanta** adjp < **kaṭa** ‘to leap, cross’]

‘**when** (you) **leaped over** the firm earth’

‘**when** (you) **crossed** the firm earth’

niṇ kuṇṇam kuṇuki c ciṇappu **uṇā-k-kāl** (pari.19:93-94)

[**uṇā** adjp < **uṇ** ‘to enjoy, experience’]

‘**when** (they) do **not** reach your hill and **experience** (your) excellence’

kallā vāy p pāṇaṇ **pukutarā-k-kāl** (kali.70:22-23)

[**pukutarā** adjp < **pukutar** (compound stem) ‘to enter’]

‘(if and) **when** the bard with an immature/unlearned mouth does

not enter (our house)’

piṇaiyal mōyiṇaḷ **uyirtta-kālai** (aka.5:23-24)

[**uyirtta** adjp < **uyir** ‘to sigh’]

‘**when** she smelled the string (of flowers) and **sighed**’

kārum: It is added to a nominal; it signifies periodicity,

(‘times’)

ēlkārum maḷaviṇṇu (pari.11:120-121)

[**ēl** ‘seven’]

‘begetting children in **all** of the **seven times**’

‘begetting children in **every** one of the **seven births**’

kīl: It is added to a nominal.

(locative [physical, hierarchical]: ‘below; by the side of’)

kuḷa-k-kīl viḷainta ... venṇel (pura.33:5)

[**kuḷam** ‘pond’]

‘the white paddy which grew **below** / by the side of **the pond**’

kunra-k-kīl (pari.19:36)
 [kunram ‘hill’]
 ‘below the hill’

kāñci-k-kīl (kali.108:63)
 [kāñci ‘kāñci tree’]
 ‘under the kāñci tree’

mannavan̄kīl k kuṭi (kali.34:14)
 [mannavan ‘king’]
 ‘the subjects under the king’

(locative [temporal]: ‘under the action of’)

ceṅkōlin̄ ceytolir-kīl (kali.99:11-12)
 [cey tolil ‘accomplished action’]
 ‘under the accomplished action of (the king’s) righteous staff/sceptre’

koṇṭu: It is added to a nominal, and can be used as a separate adverbial participle.³⁴

(i) instrumental: ‘with; by’

nuṅkōl koṇṭu kaḷam vāḷttum (pati.43:27)
 [nuṅ kōl ‘thin staff’]
 ‘(he who) praises the (battle) field holding (his) thin staff’

³⁴ **koṇṭu** is a derived form (ko! ‘to take, accept, receive’ + t past/completive marker + u adverbial participle marker). Cf. **vacciram koṇṭu** ikantu vantu eṇinteṇa (pari.5:52) ‘He carried / took hold of his weapon Vacciram, came despising (you), and threw it at (you). Therefore, ...’

annāl koṇṭu irakkum ivaḷ arum peṇal uyirē (*kali.5:19*)
 [annāl ‘that day’]
 ‘Her life will pass **by that day** / along with that day.’

tōl koṇṭu maṇaikkum cālpu uṭaiyōṇ (*puṇa.311:7*)
 [tōl ‘shield’]
 ‘He had the nobility of protecting (his men) **with** (his) **shield** in the battle.’

(ii) ‘because of; from; thereupon’

ciṇṇu puṇam **kavaiyinaṇ** āka **ataṇkoṇṭu** iku peyal maṇṇiṇ ṇekiḷpu
 aṇṇar urṇa eṇ uḷ (*aka.32:9-11*)
 [kavai < kavi ‘to cusp, hug’; **ataṇ** oblique of **atu** ‘that one’]
 ‘He **hugged** my small back. **Because of that**, my heart softened like the sand wet by the rain and experienced distress, ...’

itaṇkoṇṭu aṇṇai (*puṇa.381:20*)
 [itaṇ oblique of **itu** ‘this one’]
 ‘Know **from this**.’

cār: It is added to a nominal. As a verb, it means ‘to lean on to something.’

(locative [spatial]: ‘side; vicinity’)

kāṭṭuccār k koyta ciṇṇu mullai (*kali.117:11*)
 [kāṭṭu oblique of **kāṭu** ‘forest’]
 ‘the little jasmine (flower) which (she) picked in the **vicinity of the forest**’

cirai: It is added to a nominal; it means ‘side.’ Note that it is also used to refer to a bird’s wings.

(locative [spatial]: ‘side; vicinity’)

neṭu nakar **oru cirai** ninṇaṇṇ (aka.162:9)
 [oru ‘one’]
 ‘I stood on **one side** of the big house.’

ñāṅkar: It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; on; vicinity’)

neṭuñ-kōṭṭu **ñāṅkar** (narr.288:1-2)
 [kōṭṭu oblique of kōṭu ‘peak’]
 ‘**on the tall peak**’

(locative [temporal]: ‘at’)

pularā **ñāṅkar** (pura.374:4)
 [pularā adjp < pular ‘to dawn’]
 ‘**when it is not dawn** (yet)’

nīlam pakarpavar vayal **koṇṭa ñāṅkar** malar cūḷtantu ūr pukunta ...
 vaṇṭu (kali.66:1-2)
 [koṇṭa adjp < koḷ ‘to take hold’]
 ‘the bee circled the blue flowers **when** the sellers of those flowers **picked** them in the field, and entered the town (with the flowers)’

ñānru: It is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle.

(locative [temporal]: ‘at; when; on that day’)

maṭantai ... nōkkam ... **vilaṅku ñānrē** (aka.3:16, 17, 18)

[**vilaṅku** ‘to cross, intercept’]

‘**when** the glances of the young woman **cross** you (i.e., come in front of you)’

piṛanta ñānrē

(pari.14:25)

[**piṛa** ‘to be born’]

‘right **when** you **were born**’

anrai ñānrīṇoṭu iṇṇiṇ ūṅkum

(puṛa.376:17)

[**anrai** ‘that day’]

‘from **that day** to this day’

oru ñānru vantaṇai

(kali.37:14)

[**oru** ‘one’]

‘he who came **at one time**’

ñānrai: It is a variant of **ñānru** and is added to an adjectival participle.

(locative [temporal]: ‘at; when’)

cērppaṇ ... **vanta ñānrai**

(narr.287:5-7)

[**vanta** adjp < **var** ‘to come’]

‘**when** the Cērppaṇ **came**’

tam: It is the oblique of **tām** ‘they, self.’ It is added to a nominal.

(genitive)

vēntartam eyil (*pati.52:31*)

[**vēntar** ‘kings’; **eyil** ‘fortress’]
‘fortresses of the kings’

puraiyōrtam uḷ nīr (*kali.6:3-4*)

[**puraiyōr** ‘great people, noble people’; **tam** oblique of **tām** ‘they’]
‘the inner quality/strength of the great ones’

talai: Basically, it means ‘place, location, edge.’ It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; limit; beyond’)

marantalai c cērntu (*puṛa.371:2*)

[**maram** ‘tree’]
‘reaching the vicinity of the tree’
‘reaching the foot of the tree’

kaṭum tār tuyttalai c ceṇṇu (*pati.32:4*)

[**tuy** ‘edge, tip’]
‘the fast moving front army went to the edge (of the enemy land)’
‘the fast moving front army reached the front (of the enemy land)’

(locative [temporal/action]: ‘besides; in addition to’)

ciṛanta kātarkīlamaiyum uṭaiyaṇ atantalai iṇṇatōr kālai nillalaṇ (*puṛa.216:9-11*)

[**ataṇ** oblique of **atu** ‘that one’]
‘He has very much love for me. Besides, he will not delay at a time like this.’

(‘on the pretext of; concerning; because of’; ‘toward’, with a verb of motion)

kaṇaviṇ talai iṭṭu uraiyal (kali.92:57)

[**kaṇaviṇ** oblique of **kaṇavu** ‘dream’]

‘what you are saying **on the pretext of** (having had) **a dream**’

niṇ talai varuntiyāḷ tuyaram cenṇaṇai kaḷaimō (kali.133:18-19)

[**niṇ** oblique of **nī** ‘you’]

‘Go and remove the grief of the woman who suffered **because of** you.’

‘Go and remove the grief of the woman who is suffering **because of** you.’

eṇ talai mālaiyum vantaṇṇu iṇi (kali.143:40-41)

[**eṇ** oblique of **yān** ‘I’]

‘Now, the evening also has arrived **toward/on** me.’

taṇ: It is the oblique of **tān** ‘self.’ It is added to a nominal.

tantai taṇ ūr (narr.198:4-5)

[**tantai** ‘father’; **ūr** ‘town’]

‘her **father’s** town’

tantai iraittoṭi ... **ivaṇ taṇ** kai k kaṇ tantāriyār ... taṇ nalam pāṭuvi
tantālā (kali.84:31-32, 34)

‘Who gave his father’s bracelet in **his (own)** hand? Did the woman (his father’s concubine) who sings of her own praises give it?’

tīram/tīraṇ: It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in; side’; ‘toward’, with a verb of motion’)

avar tīram celvēṇ kaṇṭaṇeṇ (*aka.14:17*)

[**avar** ‘he (hon.)’]

‘I, who was going **toward him**, noticed ...’

vēṭṭōr tīrattu (*kali.66:23*)

[**vēṭṭōr** ‘those who (were) desired’]

‘**toward those whom you desired**’

yāṇai ... piṭiyotu **oru tīraṇ** oṭuṅka (*aka.91:5-6*)

[**oru** ‘one’]

‘as the (male) elephant moved over to **one side** with its female elephant’

evvam mikutara **eṇ tīrattu** (*kali.110:16-17*)

[**eṇ** oblique of **yāṇ** ‘I’]

‘as distress increases **in me**’

(‘concerning; about’)

neṭuntakai tīrattu ... iṇaiyaḷ (*kali.76:3-4*)

[**neṭuntakai** ‘great person’]

‘She is like this **concerning / with respect to him**, the Great One.’

toru(m): It is a variant of **tōrum** and is added to a nominal or a verb stem. It signifies periodicity or distribution.

(distributive [spatial]: ‘every’)

cimaitorū

(*pari.7:13*)

[**cimai** ‘peak’]

‘on every peak’

(distributive [temporal/action]: ‘whenever’)

uḷḷutoru uṭaiyum niṇ ... nōy

(*kali.35:22*)

[**uḷḷu** ‘to think’]

‘the (love)sickness of you who collapse **whenever** you **think about** (him)’

nī kaṭi koṇṭār k **kaṇaitorū** yām aḷa

(*kali.72:9*)

[**kaṇai** ‘to rush to join’]

‘as I cry **whenever you rush** toward the women whom you have imprisoned (for the sake of pleasure)’

tōrum: It is a variant of **toru(m)** and is added to a nominal.

(distributive [temporal]: ‘every’)

nāḷtōrum

(*kali.53:5*)

[**nāḷ** ‘day’]

‘every day’

naṭuvaṇ: It means ‘middle, center’, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in the center’)

ceḷunakar **naṭuvaṇ**

(*pati.21:12-13*)

[**nakar** ‘big house’]

‘**in the center** of the big rich house’

nāppaṇ: It means ‘middle, center’, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in the middle/midst of’)

pārkaṭal **nāppaṇ**

(*pari.13:26*)

[**pārkaṭal** ‘ocean of milk’]

‘**in the middle** of the ocean of milk’

vaiyeyiṛṛavar **nāppaṇ**

(*kali.59:12*)

[**vai** ‘sharp’; **eyiṛṛavar** ‘people with teeth’]

‘**in the midst of** women with sharp teeth’

ninru(m): It is added to a nominal. It is recognizable as the adverbial participle of the verb **niḷ** ‘to stand, stay.’

(ablative: ‘from’)

yām **avaṇ-ninrum** varutum

(*malai:53*)

[**avaṇ** ‘there’]

‘We come **from there**.’

karai-ninru pāyvār

(*pari.10:108*)

[**karai** ‘bank, shore’]

‘those who jump (into the water) **from the bank**’

pakkam: It means ‘side, vicinity’, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [temporal]: ‘at’)

eḷili icai paṭu pakkam ... maññai āṭa (pari.21:30-32)
 [paṭu ‘to befall, happen’]
 ‘as the peacock danced **at the sound of the cloud(s)**’

(locative [spatial]: ‘side’)

pāṅkar-p-pakkattu p palli paṭṭeṇa (narr.98:5)
 [pāṅkar ‘side, equality’]
 ‘since the gecko sounded **on the same side**’

veṇ maṇal pakkam (aka.160:4)
 [maṇal ‘sand’]
 ‘**by the side of the white sand**’
 ‘**near the white sand**’

(‘to the accompaniment’)

yāl-p-pakkam pāṭalōṭu āṭal (pari.10:56)
 [yāl ‘harp’]
 ‘dancing and singing **to the accompaniment of the harp**’

paṭi: It is added to an adjectival participle.

(adverb of manner)

kavutamaṇ ciṇaṇ uṇa k kal uru onriya paṭi itu (pari.19:51-52)
 [onriya adjp < onru ‘to unite’]
 ‘This is **the way** (Akalikai) united with the form of a stone as (her husband) Kavutamaṇ got angry.’

‘This is how (Akalikai) turned into a stone as (her husband) Kavutaman got angry.’

patam: It is added to an adjectival participle.

(locative [temporal]: ‘time’)

tēr varu-patam

(kali.127:10)

[varu(m) adjp < var ‘to arrive’]

‘the time **when** the chariot **arrives**’

pāṅkar: It means ‘side, equality’, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘vicinity’)

cimaya p pāṅkar p pampiya ... mucuṇṭai veṇ pū

(aka.94:1-2)

[cimayam ‘peak’]

‘white flowers of mucuṇṭai-vines which crowded **in the vicinity of the peak**’

pāṭu: It is added to a nominal and signifies periodicity.

(adverbial: ‘times’)

pal pāṭu

(pura.211:20)

[pal ‘many’]

‘**many times**’

pāl: It means ‘side, section.’ It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in the group of; together with; at’)

ciṛāar-pāl paṭṭaṇaḷ

(naṛṛ. 207:12)

[ciṛāar ‘children’]

‘She went **in the group of children.**’

cilai-p-pāl paṭṭa muḷavumāṇ koḷum kuṟai (pura.374:11)
[**cilai** ‘bow’]

‘the fat flesh of the thorny animal (porcupine) which died **at the bow**’

(directional: ‘to, toward’)

pūṇ vanta vaḷi **ninṇāl** māyakkaḷavu aṇṇēl (pari.20:76-77)
[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’]

‘if the way in which (my) jewelry came **to you** is not an illusive theft’

(‘for the sake of, on behalf of’)

nuntai pāl uṇṭi cila (kali.85:25)
[**nuntai** ‘your father’]

‘Eat some **for the sake of your father.**’

pin(**num**): It means ‘after, later.’ It is added to a nominal or a past/completive adjectival participle.

(locative [temporal]: ‘then; after’)

piṟar kūṟum paḷi māṟa p **perukarṇin**³⁵ (kali.77:11)
[**peru** ‘to experience, obtain’]

‘**when I experience** a change in the blaming words of others’

kāṭali ... ciṟu puṟam **muyāṅkiya pinṇē** (aka.19:18-19)

³⁵ In his commentary on this poem, Nacciṇārkkinīyar treats **perukarṇin** as a conditional. Although it has the force of a conditional in this context, the form **perukarṇin** is not a conditional. It is the verbal noun **perukal** followed by the postposition **pin**. If the form is **perukirṇin**, it would be a conditional. See “The Conditional” for the derivation of the conditional in classical Tamil.

[**muyaṅkiya** adjp < **muyaṅku** ‘to hug’]
 ‘after I hug my lover’s small back’

perratu utavumiṇ tappiṇru **pinnum** ... cēralātaṇ poyyalaṇ nacaīyē
 (pati.18:7, 12)

[**pin** ‘after, later’]
 ‘Give to others what you have. **Even then**, there is nothing wrong,
 (because, the king) Cēralātaṇ will not fail in giving what you wish
 for.’

(locative [spatial, hierarchical]: ‘after, behind’)

avan pin toṭarūu (pari.11:111)
 [**avan** ‘(that) he’]
 ‘going **behind him**’

vēntarum vēḷirum **pin vantu** paṇiya (pati.88:13)
 [**pin** ‘after’]
 ‘as the kings and lords **come behind** you and salute you’

vīvu il **kuṭippin** irum kuṭi āyar (kali.105:7)
 [**kuṭi** ‘clan’]
 ‘the herdsmen of the large clan which comes **after the clan** that
 never perishes’

pinrai: It means ‘after, later.’ It is added to a nominal or a past/completive
 adjectival participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘behind’)

nīrkku iyaṅku iṇa **nirai p pinrai** (aka.225:7)
 [**nirai** ‘herd’]
 ‘**behind the herd** (of cattle) that is moving toward the water’

(locative [temporal]: ‘after’)

citāar kaḷainta pinrai

(*pati.12:20*)

[kaḷainta adjp < kaḷai ‘to remove’]

‘after removing the rags’

pinnar: It means ‘after, later.’ It is added to a nominal or a past/completive adjectival participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘after’)

ērrin pinnar

(*kali.20:22*)

[ērrin oblique of ēru ‘bull’]

‘behind the bull’

puṭai: It means ‘side’ and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘side’)

kamukin puṭai cūl tenku

(*peru:363-364*)

[kamukin oblique of kamuku ‘palm tree’]

‘the coconut trees which surround (the sides of) the kamuku trees’

polutu/pōltu: It means ‘time’ and is added to an adjectival participle.

(locative [temporal]: ‘at the time; when’)

uṇṇum polutu

(*kali.35:10*)

[uṇ ‘to enjoy’; polutu ‘time’]

‘at the time of enjoying (experiencing)’

punal ... peyyum polutu

(*pari.20:106-107*)

[pey ‘to pour’]

‘when the water pours down’

kaṇai peyal taṇ tuḷi vīcum poḷutil kuṛi vantaḷ (kali.90:22)

[vīcu ‘to blow’; Note the double markers, **poḷutu** and **il**.]

‘She came for our rendezvous at the time **when** the rushing rainy clouds **scattered** cool (rain)drops.’

vaiyai vār avir aral iṭai pōlum poḷutinān (kali.28:7)

[pōl ‘to split, flow through’; Note the stack of markers: **poḷutu**, **in**, and **ān**.]

‘**at the time when** (the river) Vaiyai **flows through** the long (stretch of) bright black sand’

varutum eṇṇu avar teḷitta pōltē (aka.194:19)

[teḷi ‘to reassure’; pōltu ‘time’]

‘the time that he **reassured/specified** (as the time) when he will return’

akaṇṇavar tuṇai tārā-p-poḷutinkaṇ (kali.120:10)

[tārā adjp < tar ‘to give’; Note the stack of markers: **poḷutu**, **in**, and **kaṇ**]

‘at the time **when** the man who has gone away does **not give companionship**’

māṭṭu: Basically it means ‘to fasten.’ It is added to a nominal.

(relational: ‘toward; in relation to’)

niṇ māṭṭu ivaḷum inaiyaḷ (aka.2:12-13)

[niṇ oblique of nī ‘you’]

‘She is also like this **toward you**.’

tamiyōr māṭṭē (kuru.162:6)

[tamiyōr < tām ‘self’]

‘**toward those who are by themselves**’

māṭṭai: It is a variant of **māṭṭu** and is added to a nominal.

(relational: ‘with respect to; for the sake of’)

parukittai ... **ñāyar māṭṭai** p pāl (kali.85:35-36)

[**ñāyar** ‘your mothers’]

‘Drink the milk, please, **for the sake of your** (foster) **mothers.**’

māṇ: It is added to a nominal.

(‘times; for a long time’)

paṇ-māṇ-um kūṭi p puṇarntīr piriyaṇmin (kali.92:60-61)

[**paṇ** < **pal** ‘many, several’]

‘May you, who have been united **several times**, not be separated.’

māttiram: It is added to a verb stem.

(temporal limitation: ‘to the extent; just for’)

vauviṇaṇ **muyaṅku māttiram** vā (kali.47:21-22)

[**muyaṅku** ‘to hug, embrace’]

‘Come **just for** holding and **embracing.**’

māttirai: It is a variant of **māttiram** and is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle.

(temporal limitation: ‘except for; to the extent; till; just like; as if’)

kai **tōyal māttirai** allatu ceyti aṟiyātu aḷittu eṇ uyir (kali.110:18-19)

[**tōyal** verbal noun < **tōy** ‘to immerse’]

‘My life is pitiable. It does not know to do anything else except for **just immersing** in (your) hands.’

cuṭarē ... **pakal ceyyum māttirai** kai viḷakkāka k katir cila tārāy
(*kali.142:41-43*)

[**pakal cey** ‘to make things bright, to make daylight’]

‘O sun, give me some (of your) rays as my hand-lamp **until** you
(rise and) **make daylight.**’

imaittōr **viḷitta māttirai** ñerēreṇa k kuṇakku eḷu tiṅkaḷ ... iruḷ akarṛa³⁶
(*pura.376:7-8*)

As if those who were closing their **eyes opened** them, the moon
rising in the east removed the darkness suddenly.’

‘Within a moment of waking, the moon rising in the east removed
the darkness suddenly.’

micai: It means ‘above, top’, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘on’)

tēr micai (pati.34:5)

[**tēr** ‘chariot’]

‘**on the chariot**’

kunrin micai (pari.9:71)

[**kunrin** oblique of **kunru** ‘hill’]

‘**on the hill**’

³⁶ Probably, **māttirai** in such contexts became **mātiri** ‘like’ in modern Tamil.

mītu: It is added to a nominal.³⁷

(locative [spatial]: ‘over; on top of’)

malarmītu

(*pari.7:24*)

[**malar** ‘flower(s)’]

‘on top of the flowers’

mīmīcai³⁸:

(locative [spatial]: ‘on the very top’)

tuṟukal mīmīcai

(*narr. 206:3*)

[**tuṟukal** ‘crowded rocks’]

‘on the (very) top of the crowded rocks’

mutal (mutal): It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in; on; at’; root, source, beginning, bottom, beneath, toward, interior, center, locus, the first in a series of things)

yāṇai ... neṟi mutal uṇaṅkum ... kaṭattu itai

(*aka.29:16-18*)

[**neṟi** ‘way, path’]

‘in the middle of the forest where the elephant(s) become gaunt on the way’

³⁷ It is quite likely that it is the adverbial participle of ***mī** ‘to be on the top, to surface.’ Compare the modern Tamil form **mīti** ‘left over, remainder, excess’, which is usually derived from **mikuti**.

³⁸ Traditional grammatical description of **mīmīcai** is **iraṭṭai-k-kilavi** “doublet.” Note that it consists of two recognizable components, **mī** ‘top, raised place’ and **micai** ‘on.’ A comparable item for **mī** in modern Tamil is **uyarē** ‘above, at a height’, and for **micai** is **mēlē** ‘on, above.’

malaimutal āru (aka.119:20)

[**malai** ‘mountain’]

‘river **which originates in the mountain**’

kuṭa-ticai māyntu **kuṇamutal tōnri** pāyiruḷ akaṟṟum ... nāyiru
(pati.22:32-34)

[**kuṇa** ‘east’; **tōnru** ‘to appear’]

‘the sun which removes the widespread darkness, setting in the west and **appearing in the east**’

kuṭa ticai niṇru **kuṇa mutal celinūm** ... velli (puṛa.386:21, 24)

[**kuṇa** ‘east’; **cel** ‘to go’; **veḷḷi** ‘the white one’]

‘even if Venus goes **into the east** from the west’

‘even if Venus sets in the east, having stayed in the west’

(Note that this is a “from X to Y” type of construction.)

iravil muṭa p paṇaiyattu **vērmutalā** k kaṭai-k-kuḷattu k kayam kāya
(puṛa.229:2-4)

[**vēr** ‘root’]

‘as all the stars, **from the first** (star of the constellation) in the shape of a crooked palm to the last in the form of a pond, were glittering at night’

vaḷḷiyōr **cevi mutal** vayan̄ku moḷi **vitti** (puṛa.206:2)

[**cevi** ‘ears, inner ear’; **vittu** ‘to sow’]

‘sowing lucid words **in the interior** of the generous people’s ears’

cēe c **cevi mutal** koṇṭu (kali.103:51)

[**cevi** ‘ear(s)’; **koḷ** ‘to take hold, grasp, grab’]

‘taking hold of the bull at the **bottom of its ears**’

‘grabbing the bull’s ears at the bottom’

pati mutal paḷakā p paḷaṅkaṇ vāḷkkai (pura.393:1)
 [pati 'abode, town']

'sorrowful living that is not accustomed to the **locus of the abode**'
 'grief stricken life that is not accustomed to the depths of the town'

tolaiyā **nēmi mutal** ... pulavar ... uraitta ... kuṇṇam pala
 (pari.15:3-5)

'The hills which the poets praised, starting **from the** immortal **Nēmi** (Cakkaravāḷa mountain), are many.'

(locative [temporal]: 'for the first time; in the very beginning')

kalaimāṇ **talaiyiṇ mutal mutal** kavartta kōṭal am kavaṭṭa kuṇṅkāl
 uḷuñcil (aka.151:7-8)

'the uḷuñcil tree with a short trunk that has put out bent and forked
 branches **for the first time** (and looking) **like the head** of a stag'

murai: It means 'manner, method, way, etc.' It is added to a nominal or
 a verb stem.

(locative [temporal/action/situation]: 'next; in a sequence;
 manner; turn')

mēyāyē pōla viṇavi **vaḷimurai** k kāyāmai vēṇṭuval yāṇ (kali.82:6-7)
 [vaḷi 'way, path, route']

'I request you not to enquire (first) like a friendly person and be
 angry **next/**later.'

vaḷimurai t tāy (kali.82:15)
 [vaḷi 'route']
 'the **next** mother'

kaṇṭārkkku **irumurai** ceyyum uruvoṭu num il **ceṇimurai** vanta
 kaṭavuḷai-k-kaṇṭāyō (kali.93:18-20)

[iru ‘to crush, smash’; ceri ‘to join closely’]

‘Did you see the goddess who, with a form/shape **crushing** her onlookers, came to your house **for joining** you closely?’

mun(**num**): It means ‘earlier, previous’ and has a variant **munnai**.³⁹ It is added to a nominal or a participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in front of’)

ērri**mun** āṭi niṇru

(*kali.103:28-29*)

[ērri oblique of ēru ‘bull’]

‘standing and staggering **in front of the bull**’

(locative [temporal]: ‘before’)

tevvar cilai vicai aṭakkiya ... tānai maṇṇar iṇi yār uḷarō niṇ **munnum**
illai

(*pati.45:15-18*)

[niṇ oblique of nī ‘you’]

‘Now, which king is going to be like you with an army that controlled the fast pace of the enemies’ arrows? Neither was there any **before you.**’

ārattāl mārpum niṇ mārpum ōr otta nīrmaiya kol **ennā** **mun**

(*pari.20:64-65*)

[**ennā** negative adjectival participle < en ‘to state’]

‘**before** she could **finish saying**, “Are your chest and the chest of the woman wearing a garland of the same nature?” ...’

³⁹ Cf. attam **mun** nāl **umpar** k kaḷinta eṇ makaḷ ‘my daughter who passed through the forest **many days ago**’ (*narr.198:2-3*); **munnai** marapu ‘**earlier** convention’ (*pari.3:47*).

koyyā **munnum**

(*aka.28:3*)

[**koy** ‘to pick (leaves, flowers, fruits)’]

‘even before picking’

munnar: It is a variant of **mun**, and is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘in front of’)

tāy **munnar** ... vaḷai ukupavāl

(*kali.48:10-11*)

[**tāy** ‘mother’]

‘her bangles slip off in front of her **mother**’

ñāyirru **munnar** iruḷ pōla māyntatu eṇ āyilāi ... tuyar (*kali.145:65-66*)

[ñāyirru oblique of ñāyiru ‘sun’]

‘My lady’s grief disappeared like the darkness **in front of the sun**.’

mēl: It means ‘above’, and is added to a nominal.⁴⁰

(locative [spatial]: ‘on; above’)

yāṇai ... **eruttam mēl**

(*pati.11:18-19*)

[**eruttam** ‘nape’]

‘on the back of the elephant’

ukkattumēl

(*kali.94:17*)

[**ukkattu** oblique of **ukkam** ‘waist’]

‘above the waist’

⁴⁰ In the following contexts, **mēl** does not occur as a postposition:

‘Forward’: avvērriṇ mēnilai mikal ikaliṇ miṭai kaḷipu ilipu **mēl cenru** ... veḷḷai eruttattu p pāyntāṇai (*kali.104:32-35*).

‘Previous’: nōkkiṇ piṇikkum kaṇṇoṭu **mēl nāl** nī pūppali viṭṭa kaṭavuḷai k kaṇṭāyō (*kali.93:23-24*).

maran̄ mēl koṇṭu (narr.111:4)
 [maran̄ ‘tree’]
 ‘straddling **on the tree**’

kunrin̄mēl (kali.27:16)
 [kunrin̄ oblique of kunru ‘hill’]
 ‘**on the hill**’

en̄mēl allā viḷuntālai (pari.6:88-89)
 [en̄ oblique of yān̄ ‘I’]
 ‘the woman who fell **on me** in oblivion’
 ‘the woman who fell **on me** without realizing’

kurittatan̄mēl (kali.ka.vā:3)
 [kurittatan̄ oblique of kurittatu ‘that which was intended’]
 ‘**toward the intended** (object)’

mēliruntu: It contains two words **mēl** ‘on’ and **iruntu** ‘being, having been’; it is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘being above’)

ērriṇ̄ mēliruntu āṭi t tuṛai ampi ūrvāṇ̄ pōl tōṇ̄rum avan̄ (kali.103:38-39)

[ērriṇ̄ oblique of ēru ‘bull’]
 ‘he, who is sitting **on the bull** and swaying and (therefore) looking like someone riding a raft in the waters’

vayam: It is added to a nominal.

(directional: 'toward; along with; together')

vaiyai vayamāka vai (pari.6:78)
 [vaiyai 'the river Vaiyai']
 'Keep (your passion) **with Vaiyai.**'
 'Place your passion on Vaiyai.'

vayin: It means 'section, place.'⁴¹

(i) accusative: object

poru|vayin niṇainta col (kali.17:18)
 [poru| 'wealth']
 'words that think of/express a desire for **wealth**'

(ii) 'because of'

nam vayin varuntum (narr.303:7)
 [nam oblique of nām 'we']
 'she grieves **because of me** (i.e., my departure)'

(iii) dative: 'for; for the sake of'

poru|vayin ceṇṇa nam kātalar (kali.11:4)
 [poru| 'wealth']
 'our (hon.) lover who went away **for** the sake of **wealth**'

puraivayin periya nalki (pati.15:37)
 [purai 'nobility, greatness']
 'giving **for** the sake of **nobility**'

⁴¹ Cf. **vayintōru** 'at/in every place' (narr.183:6).

(iv) locative (spatial): ‘in; at; upon; on’

neṭuvayin oḷirum miṇṇu (pati.24:1)

[**neṭu** ‘tall, high, long’; **vayin** ‘place, path’]
‘lightning which dazzles **in the long path**’

maṇaivayin palli (kali.11:20-21)

[**maṇai** ‘house’]
‘the gecko **in the house**’

tammōṇ koṭumai **nam vayin** ēṛri (narr.88:6)

[**nam** oblique of **nām** ‘we’]
‘putting his cruelty **upon us**’

tālai ... **kuṭa vayin** kūmpu mukai aṭṭa (narr.335:4-5)

[**kuṭam** ‘hub, bulge, convex side’]
‘as conical buds unfolded on the screw-pine’s **bulging side**’

niṇ valavayin (pari.1:11)

[**valam** right’]
‘**on your right side**’

(v) directional or relational: ‘to; toward; of’

ūrvayin mīḷkuvam pōla (narr.313:8-9)

[**ūr** ‘(home) town, place’]
‘as if we move **toward our town**’

makanvayin peyartantēṇē (aka.26:21)

[**makan** ‘son’]
‘I moved **toward my son**.’

nam vayin eṇ eṇa niṇaiyum kol ... makaḷē (narr.349:9-10)

[**nam** oblique of **nām** 'we']

'What will (my) woman think **of me**?'

nam vayin yāṇō kāṇēṇ ... nāṭaṇ varūm āṛē (narr.158:1, 2, 9)

[**nam** oblique of **nām** 'we']

'I do not see the way through which the Nāṭaṇ will come **toward us**.'

poruḷ **vayin** pirital (narr.243:9-10)

[**poruḷ** 'wealth, riches']

'leaving **toward** / for the sake of **wealth**'

eṇ vayin colla vallirūm ilaṇē⁴² (aka.32:14-15)

[**eṇ** oblique of **yān** 'I']

'Nor was he able to speak **to me**.'

em vayin uḷḷātu iruttalō aritē (pura.210:6-7)

[**em** oblique of **yām** 'I (hon.)']

'It is difficult (for her) not to think **of me**.'

niṇvayin parantavai uraittēm (pari.3:10)

[**niṇ** oblique of **nī** 'you']

'I talked about those who/which spread out **from you**.'

(vi) ablative: 'from'

vīvayin tēṇ cōra (pari.16:42)

[**vī** 'flowers'; **cōr** to drop']

'as the honey **dropped from the flowers**'

⁴² In modern Tamil, it would be something like **eṇ iṭam colla**.

varai: Literally, it means ‘boundary line.’ It is added to a nominal or a verb stem.

(locative [spatial]: boundary)

malai varai mālai aḷi peyal (pari.10:1)

[**malai** ‘mountain’]

‘torrential rain which poured **on the mountain** in the evening’

(locative [temporal/action]: boundary)

kaṭavarai niṟkumō kāmam (pari.20:94)

[**kaṭa** ‘to overcome, exceed’]

‘Will passion wait **until** (it is) **overcome?**’

kāl varai nillā ... kaḷiṟṟu oruttal **yāl varai** t taṅkiyāṅku (kali.2:26-27)

[**kāl** ‘post’; **yāl** ‘harp’]

‘just as the male elephant that did not stand (bound) **at the post** stayed (still) **at the** (sound of the) **harp**’

en col varai (kali.2:28-29)

[**col** ‘words’]

‘**at my word**’

moḷiyiṇ uṇarttum **ciṟuvarai** allatu (aka.13:8)

[**ciṟu** ‘little’]

‘except for **the little time when** (he) trains (the elephant) through words’

vali: It means ‘way, path.’ It is added to a verb stem or an adjectival participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; in; through’)

vēṇṭuvali naṭantu (pari.7:19)

[**vēṇṭu** ‘to desire, wish for’]

‘(the flood) flowing **through** the **paths** it **wished**’

kāykatirōṇ pōyavalī mālai malai maṇantu (pari.20:6-7)

[**pō** ‘to go, pass’]

‘joining the mountain **through** which the scorching sun **passed**’

(locative [temporal/action]: ‘at; in; through; manner’)

pūṇ vantavalī niṇpāl (pari.20:76-77)

[**vanta** adjp < **var** ‘to come’]

‘the **manner** in which the jewelry **came to you**’

koṭumaiyum cemmaiym vemmaiym taṇmaiym uḷvalī uṭaiyai ilvalī
ilaiyē (pari.4:50-51)

[**uḷ** ‘to exist, to be’; **il** ‘to be non-existent’]

‘You exist **where** deviousness, forthrightness, heat, and cold **exist**;
you do not exist **where** they **do not**.’

vāy: Basically it means ‘orifice’, and is added to a nominal or an adjectival participle.

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; on’)

niṇ tāriṇvāy k koṇṭu muyaṅki (kali.95:14-15)

[**tār** ‘garland’; **koḷ** ‘to take hold, grasp, grab’]

‘pulling you **by the garland** on your chest and hugging’

‘hugging you by grasping / holding **on to the garland** on your chest’

peṭaiyaṇṇār ... nōkkumvāy ellām (kali.102:15)
 [nōkkum adjp < nōkku ‘to look at’]
 ‘at all the places where the innocent women look’

viyal⁴³: It is added to a nominal.

(locative [spatial]: ‘inside’)

puricaiviyal uḷḷōr (kali.81:25)
 ‘those who live **inside the fortress**’
 [puricai ‘fortress’]

Vocative:

(i) no change

aṇṇal (pari.1:27)
 ‘Noble One.’

vēntir (pura.367:14)
 ‘Kings (second person).’

(ii) adding ē or ō at the end:

aru maṇai p poruḷē (pari.1:13)
 [poruḷ ‘substance’; maṇai ‘Secret, the Vedas’]
 ‘Substance of the precious Secrets.’

⁴³ Note that the Tolkāppiyam (collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 364) considers **viyal** as an **uriccol** (“adjective”) denoting “width/breadth.”

māayōyē (*pari.3:1*)
 [mā(a)yōy ‘you, who are dark’]
 ‘Dark One.’

vāl vaḷai c ceyyāyō (*kali.14:6*)
 [ceyyāy ‘you, who are red’]
 ‘The Red One, with white bangles.’

(iii) deletion of the final consonant in a suffix beginning with **a**:

tiru maṛu mārpa (*pari.1:36*)
 [mārpan ‘man with the chest’]
 ‘O one who has the chest with the mark of Tiru (Prosperity).’

tol iyal pulava (*pari.3:86*)
 [pulavan ‘learned person’]
 ‘Learned One with established/acknowledged qualities.’

māyā manṇa (*pari.3:85*)
 [mannan ‘king’]
 ‘King who does not die.’; ‘Immortal King.’

ulaku āḷ mannava (*pari.3:85*)
 [mannavan ‘established ruler’]
 ‘King who rules over the world.’

(iv) lengthening the vowel in the last syllable:

aṭu pōr aṇṇāl (*pari.13:15*)
 [aṇṇal ‘noble person’]
 ‘Noble One who kills at battles.’

nannutāl (kali.55:5)

[**nannutal** ‘lovely forehead’; metonymy]
 ‘One with lovely forehead.’

takāa makāan (pari.8:57)

[**makan** ‘son, man’]
 ‘Man without (good) qualities.’

makāaar (pura.291:1)

[**makār** ‘children’]
 ‘Children!’

ilaṅku pūṇ māal (pari.1:28)

[**mal** ‘dark one’]
 ‘Dark One, with shining jewelry.’

vāy moḷi p pulavīr (pari.9:13)

[**pulavir** second person of **pulavar** ‘learned ones’]
 ‘Learned people, who speak words of truth.’

(iv) lengthening the final vowel:

oṇṭoṭī (kali.60:18)

[**oṇṭoṭi** ‘one wearing bright bracelets’ < **oḷ** ‘bright’ + **toṭi** ‘bracelets’]
 ‘One with bright bracelets.’

(v) changing the **ai** in the last syllable to **āy** or **ōy**:

nēriḷāy (pari.8:73)

[**nēriḷai** ‘one with perfect ornaments’
 < **nēr** ‘perfect’ + **iḷai** ‘ornaments’]
 ‘One wearing perfect ornaments.’

oḷir **vēlōy**

(*pari.8:29*)

[**vēlai** ‘one with a spear’ < **vēl** + **ai** PNG]

‘**One with dazzling spear.**’

cēval-am-**koṭiyōy**

(*pari.1:11*)

[**koṭiyai** ‘one with a banner’; second person]

‘**One with the rooster-banner.**’

THE PARTICLES

GENERAL: Certain items which can be referred to as the “particles” provide nuance to nominals and verbals in classical Tamil.¹ The significance of these particles is not always clear. The various meanings given below for each of the particles were inferred from the literary contexts in which they appear. They do overlap. Since inferences lack universality, it is quite possible to have more than one interpretation of a particle, depending on how one understands a poem as a whole and the specific context within the poem where the particle occurs.

FORMATION: No obvious method to derive the particles can be suggested.² It is sufficient to treat them as given lexical items. Most of them are added to or follow nouns and verb forms as separate items.³

¹ The tradition refers to them as *iṭaicol* “medial particles.” Some modern scholars call these items “clitics.” See Schiffman (1983:137).

² A historical reconstruction of these particles is not within the scope of this study.

³ A possible term for the item to which the particle is appended is “host” (cf. Schiffman 1983:137).

Some are added to another particle. Infrequently, some of them occur in isolation serving as interjections. When appended to or co-occurring with another particle, the second one reinforces the sense of the first. Particles do not indicate distinction between person-number-gender or between affirmation and negation.

The particles found in classical Tamil are: **attai**, **antil**, **antō**, **am**, **amma**, **ammā**, **arō**, **annō**, **āṅka**, **āṅku**, **āṅkē**, **ār**, **āl**, **um**, **en(n)a**, **ē**, **ō**, **ōrum**, **kāṇ**, **kurai**, **kol(l)ō**, **kon(nu)**, **tāṇ**, **til(la)**, **teyya**, **teyyō**, **marṛu(m)**, **marṛai**, **mannē**, **man(nō)**, **maṇra**, **mā**, **mātu**, **matō**, **māla**, and **yāla**.

EXAMPLES

Particle Significance and Example

attai: It occurs during an address to the second person; in most contexts it follows an imperative/optative.

(certainty)

paṇiyiyar attai niṇ kuṭaiyē ... mukkaṭcelvar nakar valam ceyarkē
(*pura.6:17-18*)

[**paṇi** 'to lower']

'May your (royal) parasol **be lowered**, **for sure**, in order to go around the shrine of the Lord with three eyes.'

nātu enappaṭuvatu niṇatē attai (*pura.35:11*)

[**niṇatu** 'that which is yours']

'**Yours is certainly** (what deserves to be called) a country.'

(emphasis)

ataṇ tīram attai yāṇ uraikka vantatu (*pura.28:7*)

[**tīram** ‘state, quality, nature’]

‘I came to talk to you about **that state**.’

antil: It seems to have the basic sense ‘there.’ Perhaps it is a composit of **anta** ‘that’ + **il** ‘location’ or the particles **am** and **til**.

(locative [spatial]: ‘there’)

varumē cēyīlai **antil** koḷunaṇ kāṇiya aḷiyēṇ yāṇē (*kuṛu.293:7-8*)

[**cēyīlai** ‘woman wearing fine ornaments’;

cē < **ce** ‘red, fine, nice’; **īlai** ‘ornaments’]

‘(His other) woman will come **there**. Alas, I am to be pitied.’

(locative [temporal/action]: ‘there, then, thereupon’)

viḷai vayal vantu iṛaikōṇṭaṇṛu tāṇai **antil** kaḷaiṇar yār iṇi p piṛar
(*pati.40:5-7*)

‘The army (of Cēralāṭaṇ) came and settled in the agricultural field.

Thereupon, who else (but Cēralāṭaṇ) will remove our distress?’

antō:

(pity, sympathy)

antō tāṇē aḷiyaḷ tāyē (*narr.324:1*)

‘**What a pity!** Poor Mother.’

am: It has the basic sense ‘soft, beautiful’, but not in all occurrences. Its function is very similar to the case marker **iṇ**.

(beauty)

am kaṇ akal vayal (*narr.210:1*)

[**kaṇ** ‘space’]

‘wide field with **beautiful space**’

uṇṇattu am kavaṭu (pati.23:1)
 [kavaṭu ‘branch’]
 ‘the beautiful branch of the uṇṇam tree’

(comparison)

poṇ am kompu (pari.7:56)
 [poṇ ‘gold’; kompu ‘vine’]
 ‘gold-like vine’
 ‘golden vine’

(genitive)

pulā am ceṅkōṭṭu (narr.202:1)
 [pulā < pula ‘flesh’; ceṅkōṭṭu oblique of ceṅkōṭu ‘red tusk’]
 ‘on the red tusk (of the elephant) with the flesh (of the tiger it fought with)’

kāntaḷ am kaṇṇi (pati.30:9)
 [kāntaḷ, a kind of flower; kaṇṇi ‘head garland’]
 ‘the head garland made of kāntaḷ flowers’

maḷalai am kuṟumakaḷ (narr. 209:5)
 [maḷalai ‘prattle’; kuṟumakaḷ ‘young woman’]
 ‘the young woman with immature/young words’

cūral am kaṭu vaḷi (aka.1:17)
 [cūral ‘whirlwind’; vaḷi ‘wind’]
 ‘swift shivering wind’;
 ‘blustery wind’

(locative [spatial]: ‘at; in’)

teṇ am kumari

(*pati.11:24*)

‘the **southern Kumari** (mountain)’

amma/ammā⁴:

(address requesting attention)

nakai naṇṇu amma ... ūra

(*aka.346:1, 11*)

[**ūra** vocative of **ūraṇ** ‘man from the town’]

‘**Ūra**, listen. It was good fun.’

amma vāli tōli

(*narr.79:9*)

[**tōli** ‘female friend’]

‘**Friend**. May you prosper.’

(admiration, exclamation, wonder)

tiru uṭaitamma ... niṇ ... nāṭē

(*pati.28:1, 14*)

[**tiru** ‘Prosperity’; **uṭai** ‘to have’]

‘Your country **has Prosperity**.’

pāṇ kaṭumpu aruttum cemmaṇṇu amma niṇ vem muṇai irukkai

(*pura.33:14-15*)

[**cemmal** ‘beauty, rectitude, uprightness, perfection’]

‘Your stay in the terrible battlefront **is perfect**. (Because) it feeds groups of bards.’

⁴ The Tolkāppiyam considers it a device for catching the attention of the listener (Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 276).

(certainty)

vēṇil vantanru amma tāṇē vārār ... nam kātālōrē (*aka.277:18-20*)

[var 'to come']

'Summer has arrived. Our (hon.) lover has not yet come.'

nilaṇ neḷi maruṅkiṇ nīr nilai peruka t taṭṭōr amma ivaṇ taṭṭōrē

(*puṛa.18:28-29*)

[taḷ 'to obstruct']

'Only those who embanked (the water), so that the waterfronts/reservoirs would increase where the earth (level) is low, are really those who have embanked (their reputation).'

(lamentation; expressing grief or reluctance)

valam inru amma kālaiyatu paṇpu⁵ (*pati.26:7*)

[valam 'success'; il 'to be non-existent'; kālai 'day, day-break']

'Alas! The nature of the day is not successful.'

innōy paṭuka til amma yāṇ

(*narr.277:1-2*)

[paṭu 'to die']

'Let me die because of this (love)sickness.'

(Note that amma follows til.)

emmaṇōr irappiṇ muṇṇum koṇṭir eṇa nummaṇōr maṇuttal innātu

amma

(*puṛa.203:4-6*)

[in 'pleasant'; innātu 'unpleasant, cruel']

'When people like us ask for alms, it is cruel (for you) to refuse (to give) saying that we received gifts in the past too.'

⁵ Traditional interpretation: 'The nature of the sun is not good.'

nakaiyiṇ mikkataṇ kāmamum oṇṇu **enpa ammā** (*kali.147:13-14*)
 [nakaiyiṇ mikkataṇ kāmam ‘excessive passion due to laughter’;
 enpa ‘they say’]

‘Alas! They say that there is (something like) excessive passion that is to be scoffed at.’

‘Alas! They say that there is (something like) excessive passion that emerged at the time of having fun.’

(sarcasm)

nanrāl amma ... ivaḷ nalanē (*aiṇk.248:4*)
 [nanru ‘good (thing)’; nalan ‘well-being’]
 ‘Her well-being is beautiful.’
 (Note that amma follows āl.)

varuka til amma em cēri cēra (*aka.276:7*)
 [varuka ‘Come!’]
 ‘Come to our neighborhood.’
 (Note that amma follows til.)

nallaḷ amma kuṟumakaḷ (*aka.326:3*)
 [nallaḷ ‘good woman’]
 ‘The young woman is a good woman.’

arō⁶:

(agony, pity, sympathy)

nōtaka irum kuyil ālum arō (*kali.33:24-25*)

⁶ The Tolkāppiyam refers to it as an expletive: cf. collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 279. Also note that in some contexts the structure arō is not a particle, but is the combination of ar PNG + ō particle: e.g., peru maṭam uṭaiyarō ‘she has great naivete.’ Here, uṭaiyarō < uṭaiyar + ō (*aka.310:9*).

[**āl** ‘to sound’; **nōtaka** ‘painfully’]
 ‘Alas! The dark cuckoo **sings** painfully.’

i-m-mālai aiyar avir aḷal eṭuppa **arō** eṇ kaiyaṟu neñcam kaṇaṇṟu **tī**
maṭukkum (kali.130:8-10)
 ‘Alas! My helpless heart gets angry and **consumes** fire (of agony),
 while brahmins tend dazzling (ritual) fire this evening.’

(amazement)

vayal parakkum vār veḷ aruvi parantu **āṇātu arō**
 mēlōr iyaṅkutaḷāl vīḷ maṇi nīlam ceṟu **uḷakkum arō** (pari.17:40-41)
 [**āṇ** ‘to be content with’; **uḷa** ‘to stir up’]
 ‘The tall white waterfall spreading over the fields spreads **relent-**
lessly. Since the gods move around, the gems which fall (from their
 ornaments) **stir up** the ploughed fields on the ground.’

annō:

(expressing grief about the present situation; anxiety about
 the consequence)

kaṇṇum taṇ paṇi **vaikina annō** (narr.197:3)
 [**vaiku** ‘to remain, stay still’]
 ‘Alas! Also cool drops (of tears) **stayed** in (her) eyes.’

mācu aṟu cuṭar nutal poṇ nēr vaṇṇam **koṇṭanru annō** yāṅku ākuvaḷ
 kol tāṇē (aka.192:1-3)
 [**koḷ** ‘to have, get, take hold’]
 ‘Alas! Her blemishless bright forehead **got** the color of gold (lovesick
 pallor). How is she going to be?’
 ‘Alas! Her blemishless bright forehead turned pale. What will become
 of her?’

niṇ niṇam nōkki aṇṇai viṇaviṇaḷ āyiṇ **annō** eṇ eṇa **uraikkō** yāṇē
(aka.358:9-11)

‘**What do I say, alas**, if mother, looking at your (lovesick) complexion, asks (me for the reason)?’

(lamentation; sympathy)

eṇ tōlikku **annō** ... **kauvai ākinratu** aiya niṇ naṭpē (narr.227:4, 9)
[**kauvai** ‘gossip’; **āku** ‘to become’]

‘**Alas!** O lord, your friendship is **becoming** a (source of) **gossip** for my companion.’

kiḷiyum pantum kaḷaṅkum veyyōḷ ... muṇṇāḷ pōlāl ... eṇ makaḷ
naṇṇar ākattiṭai mulai viyarppa p pal kāl **muyaṅkinaḷ** maṇṇē
annō (aka.49:1, 3, 7-9)

[**muyaṅku** ‘to hug’]

‘**Alas!** My daughter who used to like her parrot, ball, and marbles, is not like that any more; she **hugged** me several times as she perspired between her breasts. (I wonder what is bothering her.)’

Note that here **annō** follows **maṇṇē**.

(regret)

kāḷaikkū avaḷ tuṇivu **aṇṇtanen āyiṇ annō** ... iṇṇitir puṇarkkuven
maṇṇō ... tuyilē (aka.263:9-10, 13, 15)

[**aṇṇi** ‘to know’; **āyiṇ** ‘if’]

‘**If I had known** about her determination about the young man, **alas**, I would have delightfully united them for sleeping (over here).’

āṅka/āṅku/āṅkē:

āṅkē < **āṅku** + **ē**. **āṅku** has the basic meaning ‘there, then, at that time, immediately after.’ Whenever **āṅku** is appended to the quotative

eṇa, like **eṇa āṇku** ‘thus, in that manner’, it serves to separate two themes.⁷

(‘thus; in this/that manner; that being the case’)

vicumpu kaṭi viṭṭaṇṇu viḷavu-p-puṇal **āṇka** iṇṇamum kaviṇṇu aḷuṇkal
mūtūr (pari.12:99-100)

‘The sky let loose the water (in the river) for the festival. **Thus**, the ancient city brimming with pleasure and beauty ...’

eṇ iṇṇanta pukaḷavai eḷil māṇṇavai **āṇku** ... cuṇṇamōṭu oruṇku niṇ
aṭi uṇai yām iṇṇantu oṇṇupu vaikalum polikeṇa ... paravutum
(pari.1:60-64)

‘You have an enormous fame. You have a beautiful chest. **That being the case**, we pray that we, with our kith and kin, attain (the fortune of) being at your feet and prosper for ever.’

āṇku a-m-mū-v-iru mukaṇṇu muṇai naviṇṇu oḷukaliṇ (tiru:103)
‘**Thus**, since all those six faces (of Murukaṇ) practice order, ...’

eṇa **āṇku** ... iṇṇaiva ... niṇ pukaḷ ētti aṇi neṭum kuṇṇam pāṭutum
toḷutum (pari.17:47, 49, 50-51)

‘**In this manner**, Lord, we praise you and sing of your beautiful hill and salute it.’

⁷ Traditional commentators usually refer to these forms as “**acai**” or “**acai nilai**.” Their cryptic usage of the term **acai** has led to underestimation of the function of these words. These words have specific semantic and prosodic functions as **urai-y-acai** “a meaningful word which functions as a metrical foot (**cīr**)” or **oḷi-y-acai** “a single **acai** standing alone as the first foot in a line (**aṭi**),” or a **vaḷi-y-acai** “a foot standing at the end of a line to be combined with the next line to make sense.” See “**corcīr aṭi**” in “Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry” for more.

tām añciyatu āṅkē aṇaṅku ākum eṇṇum col (kali.24:1, 2)
 ‘the saying that what one is afraid of will become an affliction **in the same manner**’

ār: It is always appended to the particle **um** ‘and, too, even.’

(‘a vast deal’)

maṇai keḷu peṇṭirkku nōvumār peritē⁸ (aiṅk.382:5)
 [nōvu ‘pain’]
 ‘The pain (of separation from their men) is **very much** for those women who stay at home.’

(certainty; emphasis)

atu tāṇ ellārum uvappatu aṇṇiyum nal āṇṇu p paṭūum neṇṇiyumār
 atuvē (pura.195:7-9)
 [neṇṇi ‘precept’]
 ‘That is what everyone enjoys. Not only that, it is **the precept** which guides (everyone) in good path.’

āl: It is always appended to a finite verb/predicate. It differs from the case marker **āl** in significance and pattern of occurrence. When describing a place with its various activities, the narration ends with this particle or begins with an expression ending with this particle.⁹

⁸ Traditional commentators take **m** and **ār** together and treat **mār** as a sound filler or separate **ār** from **um** and think of it as a sound filler: e.g., āṇṇē ... koṇṇaiyoṭu malarnta kuruntumār uṭaittē (aiṅk.436:1, 3) ‘The path has kuruntu trees which have bloomed along with the koṇṇai trees.’ The Old Commentary on this text notes that **ār** here is a sound filler. However, it is worth noting that the verb **ār** means ‘to be full.’

⁹ Cf. iṇṇumpūṭāl peritē ‘The amazement is great, indeed.’ (paṭi.33:1).

(amazement)

munkai ... vīci **valluvai** manṇāl naṭaiyē ... malai vayiṇāṇē
(aka.257:10-12, 21)

[**val** 'to be skilled; be able']

'**You are skilled** in walking through the mountain, swinging your forearms.'

(Note that **āl** follows **man**.)

('indeed; certainly; definitely')

maṭattaṅku **aritāl** ... arivai makiṇtu ayar nilaiyē (narr.42:1, 12)

[**aritu** 'is difficult']

'It is **certainly difficult** to forget how the young lady rejoices.'

niṇ kalkeḷu ciṟu kuṭi eytiya piṇrai **ūtal vēṇṭumāl** ciṟitē ... nāy payir
... koṭē (aka.318:11-13, 15)

[**ūtal vēṇṭum** 'must blow']

'After reaching your small residence in the mountains, you **must definitely blow** for a bit the horn which (normally) calls out to (your hunting) dogs.'

ūra **poyyāl** aṟiven niṇ māyam (aka.256:7-8)

[**poy** 'a lie']

'O Ūra, it is **a lie**. I know of your illusion / illusive acts.'

(optative)

āṟṟiṇ vārār āyiṇum āṟṟa ēṇai ulakattum **iyaivatāl** namakku
(kuri:23-24)

[**iyaivatu** 'that which is possible'; here, used as an optative]

'Even if he does not come (asking) for us through proper custom, **may it** (his friendship) **be possible** for us in the next world.'

(sarcasm)

kaḷaṅkiṇāṇ aṛikuvatu eṇṛāl naṇṛāl amma niṇṛa ivaḷ nalaṇē

(*aiṅk.248:3-4*)

[**naṇru** 'good thing']

'If one could know (the cause of her lovesickness) by the marbles, her remaining loveliness will **be good**.'

'If one could find out (the cause of her lovesickness) by the marbles, her remaining loveliness will **do well**.'

('to prevail')

kūtir niṇṛaṇṛāl pōtē

(*neṭu:72*)

[**niṇraṇru** 'it stayed']

'The cold **prevailed** at that time.'

um: The sense 'even, also, too' is obtained when **um** is suffixed to only one nominal in the senetence. The sense 'and' is obtained when **um** is suffixed to nominals in a coordinate construction sharing the main verb. The sense 'not only' is obtained when **um** is suffixed to **aṇri** 'not being so.' The sense 'neither ... ; nor ... ' is obtained when **um** is suffixed to nominals or verbals in separate clauses and the main verb in each clause is negative.

('also, too, even')

ciṛanta aṇṇiṇar cāyalum uriyar

(*narr. 208:8*)

[**cāyal** 'gentleness']

'He has great love (for me). He is **gentle too**.'

kaṭuvaṇum aṛiyā k kātu

(*aiṅk.374:4*)

[**kaṭuvaṇ** 'male monkey'; **kātu** 'jungle']

'jungle which **even a male monkey** does not know (well)'

oru tām ākiya **perumaiyōrum** tam pukaḷ niṭi c ceṇru māyntaṇarē
(*pura.366:4-5*)

[**perumaiyōr** ‘people with greatness’]

‘**Even the great ones**, who were unique, established their reputation, left, and perished (eventually).’

innatūum kāṇāṇ kaḷitalum uṇṭu (*kali.37:9-10*)

[**innatu** ‘this; of this nature’]

‘He might leave without seeing **even this**.’

veyil tukaḷ **anaittum** (*pati.20:6*)

[**anaittu** ‘that; of that nature’]

‘**even** (as little) as the (dust) particles (visible) in the rays of the sun’

(conjunction: ‘and; not only; neither ... nor ...’)

neṭiya **moḷitalum** kaṭiya **ūrtalum** celvam aṇru taṇ ceyviṇai p payaṇē
(*narr. 210:5-6*)

[**moḷital** ‘speaking’; **ūrtal** ‘riding’]

‘**Talking big and riding** fast vehicles are not (true) wealth; they are the fruits of one’s actions.’

atu tāṇ ellārum uvappatu **anriyum** nal āṇruppaṭūum neṟiyumār atuvē
(*pura.195:7-9*)

[**anri** ‘not being so’]

‘That is what everyone enjoys. **Not only that**, it is the precept which guides (everyone) in good path.’

ceṇṇōr mukappa p **poruḷum** kiṭavātu oḷintavar ellārum **uṇṇātum**
cellār (*kali.18:5-6*)

[**poruḷ** ‘wealth, riches’]

‘Wealth will not be lying still for the passers by to fetch. **Neither would** all the people who go there **pass without consuming/enjoying** it.’

(comparison)

pirinta **namminum** iraṅki (*narr.208:9*)
 [**nam** oblique of **nām** ‘we (hon.)’]
 ‘pining **more than I** who departed (from her)’

(emphasis)

nanrum taṭaiiya meṇ tōlāy (*kali.93:5*)
 [**nanru** ‘good thing’]
 ‘O one with soft shoulders which are **well** rounded.’
 (The adverbial sense of **āka** is conveyed here by **um**.)

(inclusive; closing a set of items)

nīr nilam tī vaḷi vicumpōṭu **aintum** aḷantu kaṭai aṛiyiṇum aḷappu
 arum kuraiyai (*pati.24:15-16*)
 [**aintu** ‘five’]
 ‘You are difficult to be measured even if one could measure and understand the limits of **all the five** (elements) such as the water, the earth, the fire, the air, and the sky.’

yāvarum kaṇṭu mati maruḷum vāṭā c conṛi (*pati. 24:21-22*)
 [**yāvar** ‘anyone, who?’]
 ‘the limitless (amount of) rice which **everyone** looks at and is awestruck by’
 ‘the limitless (amount of) rice which amazes **every** onlooker’

(sound filler)

karuvi vāṇam **talaiiyāṅkum** ītta niṇ pukaḷ (*puṛa.159:19-20*)

[**talaii** advp < **talai** 'to fall in a place']

'your reputation, who gave (to the suppliants) just like the cloudy sky poured'¹⁰

(Note that **um** is appended to **āṅku**.)

ena: See also "Imitative Words."

(enumerative, quotative)

oṇṇu **ena** iraṇṭu **ena** mūṇṇu **ena** ... toṇṭu **ena** nālvakai ūḷi navirrum
ciraṇṇai (*pari.3:77-80*)

'You are illustrious. In all the four types of eons, you are praised as (manifesting in) one, two, three, (four, five, six, seven, eight), and nine (elements and senses).'

ē: It is the most widely used particle in this period and its various meanings are not easily distinguished. It occurs at the end of a noun, finite verb, or the entire poem. When describing a place with its various activities, the **ē** serves to separate the various parts of the narration. It means 'whereas', 'on the other hand', etc.

(admiration)

nilam nīr vaḷi vicumpu **enṛa** nāṅkiṇ aḷappu **ariyaiyē** (*pati.14:1-2*)
[**ariyai** 'you are difficult' < **aru** 'to be difficult']

¹⁰ The interpretation given here follows U.V. Saminathier's commentary. Another possible interpretation is to take **āṅku** to mean 'there/then' and **um** 'even.' Then the particle **um** would have a purpose: 'The sky with patchy clouds rained heavily. **Even then** you gave to the suppliants. Such reputation ...'

‘You are difficult to be measured (understood) like the four such as the earth, the water, the wind, and the sky.’

celvam iṇitu **kaṇṭikumē** (pati.11:20)
 [kaṇṭikum ‘we saw’ < kāṇ ‘to see’]
 ‘We saw (your) wealth/riches well.’

(adverb of manner; ‘as’)

vem curam **taniyē irappa** (kali.23:3-4)
 [tani ‘alone’; ira ‘to cross over, pass through’]
 ‘as you **cross over** the hot forest **alone**’

ollaiyē uyir **vauvum** uru (kali.58:17)
 [ollai ‘fast’; vauvu ‘to grab, snatch’]
 ‘your appearance/shape which **snatches** (my) life (breath) **fast**’

(completing a statement or poem)

pācaṇai nīṭṭṇai ākaliṇ kāṇku **vanticiṇē** (pati.16:8-9)
 [vanticiṇ ‘I have come’ < var ‘to come’]
 ‘Since you delayed at the war camp, **I have came** to see you.’

(emphasis; certainty)

teruḷa niṇ varavu aṇital maruḷ aṇu tērci munaivarkkum **aritē** (pari.1:29-30)

[aritu ‘that which is difficult’; munaivar ‘those who concentrate’]
 ‘Even for those who focus their attention and are sure of things without illusion, it **is difficult, indeed**, to know about your origin clearly.’

evvayiṇḍoyum **nīyē** niṇ ārvalar toḷuta kai amaitiyiṇ amarntōyum **nīyē**
(*pari.4:70-71*)

[**nī** ‘you’]

‘**You are the one** who are everywhere. **You are the one** who have settled in your devotees’ hands which are closed up for prayer.’

veriyum uḷavē (*pari.5:15*)

[**veri** ‘frenched dance’; **uḷa** ‘there are’]

‘There are **also** instances of the **frenzied dance**.’

(Here the **ē** emphasizes the sense of **um** which in this context means ‘too, also.’)

(exclusive)

tunṇarum kāṇam eṇṇāy **nīyē** ... ivaḷ iṇṭu oḷiya āḷviṇaikkku akaṇi āyiṇ
(*narr.205:5-7*)

[**nī** ‘you’]

‘without thinking of the forest that is difficult to get through, if **you** were to depart **by yourself** for the sake of manly duties while she is left here’

(immediacy; simultaneity)

yāṇ eṇcātu oru kai maṇal koṇṭu mēl tūva k **kaṇṭē** kaṭitu araṇṇi p
pūcal toṭaṅkiṇaṇ (*kali.65:20-22*)

[**kaṇṭu** advp < **kāṇ** ‘to see’]

‘Without being actionless, I grabbed the sand in one hand and threw it at him. **Seeing that**, he blabbered **immediately** and started to scream.’

niḷ eṇa niṇuttāṇ **niṇuttē** vantu (*kali.55:6*)

[**niṇu** ‘to make stand, stop’]

‘He stopped me saying “Stop!” **Stopping** (me), he came (toward me) immediately, and ...’

(rhetorical; question marker)

nāl̥ kuraipaṭutal kāṇunar yārē (pari.11:38)
[yār ‘who?’]

‘**Who** are those who (can) see that the days (of life) are diminishing?’
(It implies a negative answer.)

aṛivum pukaḷum uṭaiyōr māyntēṇa vaṛuntalai ulakamum anrē
(pura.206:8-9)

[anru ‘it is not’]

‘The world **is not** an empty space, with the learned and famous people gone, **is it?**’

eṇai nāl̥ taṅkum num pōrē, aṇai nāl̥ eṇiyār eṇital yāvaṇatu
(pura.301:7-8)

[eṇai nāl̥ ‘how many days?’; aṇai nāl̥ ‘those many days’;
taṅku ‘to stay’; pōr ‘war’]

‘For how many days **the war** will last, for those many days, where will you see (him) fighting with those who do not fight with him.’

‘No matter how long the war lasts, you will not see him fighting with people who cannot fight back.’

(Actually, ē serves as a rhetorical question marker here, but with an additional purpose. An interrogative word [eṇai nāl̥ ‘how many days’] begins a clause in which the particle ē is appended to the noun [pōr ‘war’] referred to by the interrogative and closes the clause. The next clause begins with the deictic a ‘that’ [aṇai nāl̥

‘those days’], referring back to what was referred to by the interrogative [**enai**]. The combination **e... ...ē**, **a...** gives the sense ‘However/Whatever ..., that’)

ceṇṇi cēvaṭi cērttiṇ eṇ eṇappaṭumō eṇṛalum uṇṭē (*narr.342:9-10*)
[**uṇṭu** ‘there is’]

‘If I make my head join (her) red feet, **is it likely** that (she) would ask “What is it?” ’

‘If I fall at her decorated feet, would she care to ask me “What is it?” ’

(serial; reckoning)

cinanē kāmam kaḷi kaṇṇōṭṭam ... teṛal kaṭumaiyoṭu piṛavum
(*pati.22:1, 3*)

[**cinan** ‘anger’]

‘**anger**, passion, excessive pity, the harshness of killing, and others’
(Here, **ē** occurs only at the end of the first item in the list, **cinan**.)

(separating several themes)

nī ēntiya **paṭaiyē** oṇṇār uṭaṅku uṇṇum kūṛṛam **uṭalē** poṇ nēṛpu avir
aḷal nuṭakku ataṇ **nīṛanē** (*pari.2:49-51*)

[**paṭai** ‘weapon’; **uṭal** ‘body’]

‘**The weapon** (discus) that you carry consumes (your) enemies all at once. **Its body** is Death. **Its color**, the swaying flame of bright gold-like fire.’

kuṛumakaḷ ... tīṅkural kiḷiyum tām **aṛipavvē enakkē** paṭuṅkāl paiyuḷ
tīrum (*narr.209:5-7*)

[**aṛipa** ‘they know’ < **aṛi** ‘to know’; **eṇ** oblique of **yān** ‘I’]

‘Even the parrots (in the millet field) **know** the young woman’s sweet voice. **My suffering, on the other hand**, will be over (only) when I die.’

ō: See also “Vocative” in “Case Markers And Postpositions.”

(ablative: ‘from’)

ellām tuyilō eṭuppuka (kali.70:21)

[tuyil ‘sleep’; eṭu ‘to raise, arouse’]

‘Let everything (like, the sound of the drum, the sound of the tuṇaṅkai dance, and the sound of the bells on your chariot) **arouse me from sleep.**’

(amazement)

annaiyō yām em makaṇai p pārāṭṭa k katumeṇa t tām vantār ... yār
kolō (kali.85:29-31)

[annai an address form]

‘Wow! When I was praising my son, he arrived suddenly. Who is he?’

(interrogative)

niṇ niṇam nōkki annai viṇaviṇaḷ āyiṇ annō eṇ eṇa uraikkō yāṇē
(aka.358:9-11)

[uraikkō < uraikku ‘I will say’ + ō]¹¹

‘What do I say, alas, if mother, looking at your (lovesick) complexion, asks (me for the reason)?’

¹¹ It is possible to derive this from uraikka + ō.

punattu erpaṭa **varukō** ... cāral āṭukam **varukō** ... kūru iṇi
(*narr.204:2, 4*)

[**varukō** < **varuku** 'I shall come' + **ō**]¹²

'Shall I come to the (millet) field after the sun set? Or, shall I come to the mountain slope for playing? Tell me now.'

añcāyō ivaḷ tantai kai vēlē (*aink.60:4*)

[**añcu** 'to fear']

'Won't you fear the spear in her father's hand?'

(reckoning)

ūroṭu niṛai cāl viḷupporuḷ tarutal **onrō** ... eri parappi p pakai ceytu
paṇpu il āṇmai tarutal **onrō** ... iraṇṭiṇuḷ onru ākāmaiyo aritē¹³

(*puṛa.344:3-7*)

[**onru** 'one thing']

'It would be certainly rare if one of these two would not become true: **one**, (her relatives) giving their town along with plenty of supreme riches (to her suitors); **another one**, (her suitors) showing unscrupulous manliness by spreading fire (in her town) and bringing hostility.'

(reinforcing the preceding item)

pāṭukam **vamminō** paricil mākkal (*puṛa.32:6*)

[**vam** < **var** 'to come']

'Come, Suppliants. Let us sing.'

¹² Some might derive this from **varuka** + **ō**.

¹³ The traditional commentator U.V. Saminathier considers **onrō** to be the particle, not just the **ō**.

kalīru aṇṇān tannai oru penṭir aruḷa-k-kiṭantatu **evan** kolō
(kali.61:18-19)

[**evan** 'how?']

'How is it that a woman has to show mercy to a man who is like a bull elephant?'

'How could a man, who is like a bull elephant, lie still, so a woman shows him mercy?'

(rhetorical question)

kāmar perukku **anrō** vaiyai varavu (pari.6:69-70)

[**perukku** 'flooding'; **anru** 'it is not']

'The flooding in Vaiyai is desirable, **is it not?**'

(separator; 'on the other hand; whereas')

tuṟaiyaṇ **enakkō** kātalan **aṇaikkō** vēṛē (aiṅk.156:4-5)

[**enakku** 'for me'; **aṇaikk** 'for mother']

'The man from the water-front is **lover to me, whereas** he is someone else **for my mother.**'

aṇaiyavai pōṟṟi niṇaiiyaṇa nāṭi k kāṇ **vaḷamaiyō** vaikalum ceyal ākum (kali.15:23-24)

[**vaḷamai** 'riches, bounty']

'Consider those things and seek what you intend. **Riches, on the other hand,** can be obtained any day.'

nammaiyō maṟantaikka ... kūṭalum uḷḷārkol (kali.27:10,12)

[**nam** oblique of **nām** 'we']

'He may forget about **us. On the other hand,** won't he remember even Kūṭal (Madurai)?'

‘He may forget about us. But won’t he remember even Kūṭal (Madurai)?’

ōrum: It is possible to interpret **ōrum** as an adjectival participle derived from **ōr** ‘to think about; to search for.’ It has the force of an adjectival participle or a finite verb.¹⁴

(comparison)

maṭa **mayil ōrum** maṇaiyavar (pari.19:21)
 [mayil ‘peacock’]
 ‘women at home who are like innocent peacocks’
 ‘women at home who reminds us of peacocks’

kāṇ: It has the basic sense ‘to see, look into, realize.’ When used as a particle, it verifies a fact and/or alerts one to reality.

(verification)

tērtarṭku aritu **kāṇ**¹⁵ (pari.22:34)
 [aritu ‘is difficult’]
 ‘It is difficult to be sure of ..., you see.’

cērppa koṭiyai **kāṇ** nī (kali.125:15)
 [koṭiyai ‘you are cruel’ < koṭu ‘to be crooked, cruel’]
 ‘Cērppa. You are cruel, you know.’

¹⁴ Cf. miṇ **ōrum** kaṇ āka ‘lightning (which helps) as searching eyes’ (kali.49:12); taṇittu **ōr** tēr vantu peyarntatu eṇpa atarṭkoṇṭu **ōrum** alaikkum aṇṇai ‘They say that a lone chariot (of my lover) came and left. Consequently, mother **thinks** about it and hits me’ (kuru.246:3-5). In most contexts, traditional commentators refer to **ōrum** as a sound filler.

¹⁵ The earliest commentator on this text, Parimēlaḷakar, considers **kāṇ** as a sound filler.

virumpi nī eṇ tōḷ eḷutiya toyvilum ... niṇ maintu-uṭai mārpil cuṇaṅkum
niṇaittu k kāṇ ... aritu arō ceṇṇa ilamai taraṅku

(kali.18:2, 3-4, 11-12)

[**niṇaittu** < **niṇai** ‘to think’]

‘**Think about** the things you have painted willingly on my (friend’s) shoulders; and about the passion marks caused by your strong chest. Then **realize** (among other things) that (if you leave now) it would be difficult, indeed, to bring back the youth that has gone.’

kurai: As a verb it means ‘to sound, roar.’¹⁶

(quality; characteristic)

aḷappu arum **kuraiyai**

(pati.24:16)

[**aru** ‘rare, be difficult, precious’]

‘You have the **quality** that is difficult to be measured/understood.’

kaṭumkurai arumaiya kāṭu

(kali.13:25)

[**kaṭu(m)** ‘intense, severe’]

‘the forests **are severely/extremely** difficult (to pass through)’

nēvarum kuraiya kalam keṭiṇ puṇarum

(kuṛi:14)

[**nēr** ‘perfect’; **var(u)** ‘to bring’]

‘If jewels with **perfect quality** are damaged, they will join (when someone fixes them).’

¹⁶ Traditional commentators consider **kurai** as a sound filler: cf. Nacciṇārkkkiṇiyar’s commentary on *kuṛi:14*, where he refers to **kuraiya** as an “**acai**.”

kol(lō):

(interrogative; wonder)

arivaikku **yārkol** aḷiyai (pati.19:14-15)[**yār** ‘who?']‘You are to be sympathized/pitied. **Who** are you to the young woman?’iṇṇoṭu **pōyinrukollō** tāṇē ... ivaḷ māmai k kaviṇē (narr.205:7-8, 11)[**pōyinru** ‘it left’ < **pō** ‘to go’]‘**Perhaps** her dark attractive beauty **left** (her) today.’iṇṇakaiyavar cīraṇi vaiyaikku **aṇikollō** vaiyai taṇ nīr aṇi nīttamivarkku **aṇikol** (pari.22:31-33)[**aṇi** ‘beauty, decoration’]‘Is the beautiful row of sweet-smiling women **a decoration** for Vaiyai? Is Vaiyai’s waves of water **a decoration** for them?’**naṇāḷkol** tōḷi (pari.12:45)[**nāṇ(u)** ‘to be coy, be bashful’]

‘Won’t she be coy, my Friend?.’

kon(nu):

(excessive: ‘greatly; for no good reason; without use’, etc.)

avar **konnu nampum** kuraiyar tāmē (narr.208:6-7)[**nampu** ‘to believe, trust’]‘He has the quality of **being trusted greatly**’

‘He is greatly to be trusted’

nannutal inru māl ceyteṇa k **kon** onru **kaṭuttanaḷ** annai (*aink.194:3-4*)
 [kaṭu ‘to chide, to show signs of anger’]
 ‘Her lovely forehead confused her mother, and mother **showed a great deal of anger.**’

kaṇṇi pinṇu p puram tāḷa k **konnē** cūṭṭi (*aka.180:6-7*)
 [cūṭṭu ‘to make wear’]
 ‘**putting** the string of flowers to lie low **on** her braided hair **without any purpose**’¹⁷

tān:

(emphasis)

nallatu ceṭtal āṇṇīr āyiṇum allatu ceṭtal ōmpumiṇ **atutān** ellārum
 uvappatu (*puṇa.195:6-8*)
 [atu ‘that one’]
 ‘Even if you are unable to do good, check/prevent yourself from doing bad. **That** (indeed) is what everyone enjoys.’

yāṇ celiṇ nanti c ceṇiṇ cāmpum iḷaḷ eṇṇum **takaiyōtān** ... ētilār toṭi
 uṇṇa vaṭu k kāṭṭi īṇku em il varuvatai (*kali.78:19-22*)
 [takai ‘quality, nature, characteristic’]
 ‘You are coming here to our house showing off your scars made by other women’s bracelets. **Is it indeed** your **nature** to think “She will exult if I go (to her) but will wither if I resent her”? ’

¹⁷ **kon** in another context has been taken to denote “time” instead of meaning ‘without any purpose’: niṇ mukam tāṇ peṇiṇ allatu **konnē** maruntu piṇṇu yāṭum illēṇ (*kali.60:20-21*): cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on these lines.

(reflexive)

nakai nanru amma **tānē**

(aka.400:1)

[**tān** 'self, it']

'It was good fun.'

til(la): It expresses a sense of wishing or possibility based on a condition.

(wish)

innē **muṭikatil** amma ... pācaṛai t toḷilē

(neṭu:168, 188)

[**muṭika** 'May it end']

'May the (king's) work at the war camp **come to a conclusion** today.'

pacappu nī viṭiṇ **celvēmtilla** yāmē

(aink.429:1-2)

[**viṭu** 'to let go'; **cel** 'to go, leave']

'I **shall leave** (in search of wealth) if you let go your lovesick pallor.'

kāṇkuvemtilla avaḷ kaṇiṇ peṛu cuṭar nutal ... vēntu toḷil viṭiṇē

(aink.443:3, 5)

[**kāṇ** 'to see']

'I **shall see** her beautiful bright forehead, if the king completes/ends his task.'

(reluctance)

polam pūṇ vēntar **palartil** amma

(pati.64:2)

[**palar** 'many people']

'The kings with gold ornaments **are numerous, you know.**'

kāṭalar maṛantaṇarōṭil maṛavā nammē (aiṅk.319:3-4)

[maṛantaṇarō ‘did he forget?']

‘Has my lover forgotten me who has not forgotten him?’

em mutumai eḷḷal aḷtu amaikumtilla (aka.6:14-15)

[amaikum ‘We/I (hon.) will accept / be calm’]

‘Do not mock at my aging. I shall accept it.’

‘Do not mock at my old age. It is acceptable to me.’

teyya: It functions like the particle **attai**, but is not always addressed to the second person.

(suggestion)

iṇru nī iṇṇai āki ... taṅkin evaṇō teyya (narr.215:8-9)

[taṅkin conditional < taṅku ‘to stay over’; evaṇ ‘what?’; ō particle]

‘What if you become one (of us) here now and stay over?’

peṇṇai naṭuvaṇatuvē teyya ... nallōḷ tantai ciṇu kuṭi p pākkam (nārr.323:1-2, 6)

[naṭuvaṇatu ‘that which is in the middle’; ē particle]

‘The Pākkam, where the good woman’s father’s small clan lives, is among the peṇṇai trees.’

(adverbial)¹⁸

col iṇi t teyya yām teḷiyum āṛē (aka.220:22)

[col ‘to tell’; iṇi ‘now’]

‘Tell us now clearly, how we can be reassured.’

¹⁸ It is not clear whether **teyya** in these examples can be interpreted simply as an address form.

oyya-p-pōvālai ... **teyya** neṛi maṇal **nēṭinar** cella (*pari.20:41-43*)
[**nēṭu** ‘to look for’; **cel** ‘to go’]

‘as they went along the sandy path looking intently for her who rushed to escape’

(Note that **teyya** here is not addressed to someone in the second person.)

ivaḷ nalam paṇṭum iṛṛē **kaṇṭicin** **teyya** (*narr.35:7-8*)
[**kaṇṭicin** ‘you see’ < **kāṇ** ‘to see’]

‘Her wellbeing was like this even in the past. See this well.’

teyyō: It is a variant of **teyya**, except that it occurs only in the second person.

(address)

vārāyāyiṇ **vālēm** **teyyō** (*aink.239:5*)
[**vāl** ‘to live, thrive’]

‘If you do not come (to visit us) we shall not survive.’

maṛru(m): **maṛru/maṛrai** means ‘the other.’¹⁹

(‘however; but then; nevertheless’)²⁰

ītal māṭṭu otti ... **maṛru** ovvāti ... makalirai nuntai pōl nōy kūra
nōkkāy viṭal (*kali.86:21-24*)
[**o** ‘to be like, resemble’]

¹⁹ Cf. aintalai avir poṛi aravam mūtta maintaṇ aruku oṇṇu **maṛru** iḷam pārppu (*pari.19:72-73*).

²⁰ One traditional commentator’s definition of **maṛru** as **vinai māṛru** ‘change of action’ in one context is worth noting. See Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *kali.93:10*.

‘Be like your father with respect to giving. **But then, do not be like** him. Do not leave (your) women without paying attention when their lovesickness (for you) increases.’

maṭamakal ... uḷḷal kūṭatu eṇrōy marṛum ... pōtal ollāl eṇ neñcattāṇē
(*narr.201:1, 4, 12*)

[pō ‘to leave’; ol ‘be able, possible’]

‘You said that I should not think of that innocent woman. **But then,** she is unable to leave my heart.’

(answer: ‘otherwise; in response to; then’)

cen-tiṇai kaṭiyum uṇṭaṇa ... mauvalum arumpiṇa ... naḷ iruḷ varaiyaka
nāṭaṇ varūm eṇpatu uṇṭukol aṇṛukol yātukol marṛu
(*narr.122:2, 4, 5-7*)

[yātu ‘what?’; kol particle]

‘The red millet (plants) are guarded. The wild jasmine are in bloom. Will the man from the mountainous country come (for a rendezvous) in the thick of the night? Will he not? **Then, what?**’

nāṭaṇ paṇ malai arum curam iṇappiṇ nam viṭṭu yāṅku vallunam
marṛē ... paṭuttal ... kaṇṇē
(*narr.171:5-8, 11*)

[kaṇ paṭuttal ‘making the eyes sleep’]

‘If the Nāṭaṇ leaves us and goes through the difficult mountainous forest, **then** how can we close our eyes (for sleeping)?’

nāṇāḷkol tōḷi ... parattaiyiṇ tōḷi nalam uṇṭu tuṇantāṇ eṇa orutti yāṇar
mali puṇal nīttattu irum piṭi cēṇa verinil ciṇantāṇōṭu ēṇiṇāl nāṇu k
kuṇaivilaḷ naṅkai marṛu
(*pari.12:45-49*)

[nāṇukkuṇaivu ‘virtue of shame’]

‘Isn’t she ashamed of herself? My friend, he (her lover) enjoyed the loveliness of another woman and left her (too). Now, this (shameless) woman got on the back of a tall dark elephant with him in the floods of Vaiyai. She does not have the **virtue of shame to respond** (to his act).’

(‘moreover; in addition to; thereafter’)

tantai kāmura toṭakkattu tāy ulai p pukkārku avaḷum ... perumāṇ
nakai mukam kātṭu eṇṇpāl kaṇṇīr cori muttam kāl cōrva pōṇṇa
marṛum vaḷimurai t tāy ulai p pukkārku avaḷum ... muyaṅkiṇaḷ
... koḷvaṇa nāṭi aṇintaṇaḷ *(kali.82:10-19)*

‘(My little son) went near the woman whom his father took as a lover in the beginning. Saying to him, “Lord, show me your smiling face,” that woman shed tears which resembled pearls falling off a string. **Thereafter**, he went near the next woman his father took as lover. This woman hugged him and put on him carefully chosen proper jewelry.’

cerukkoṭu ninṇa kālai **marṛu** ... kallā iḷaiṇar colli k kātṭa
(poru:89, 100)

‘When we stood there with triumphant joy, (the king’s) young men (in attendance) **then** told (the king about us) and showed (us to the king), and ...’

(another kind)

maṇippīli cūṭṭiya nūloṭu **marṛai** aṇippūlai āvirai erukkoṭu piṇittu yāttu
(kali.138:8-9)

‘together with the thread holding the peacock feathers, he tied **yet another** string (of flowers) such as the beautiful pūlai, āvirai, and erukkam, and ...’

man(nē)/**man**(nō)²¹:

(adverb of manner: ‘well’)

curi mucci **mulutuman** puraḷa ... paḷ kuḷai t toṭalai (aka.390:5, 7)
[**mulutum** ‘in its entirety’]
‘as the garland with many leaves rolls **well over** (her) curly hair’

(certainty: ‘clearly; definitely’)

ituman pirintōr uḷḷum poḷutē (aiṅk.487:1)
[**itu** ‘this one’]
‘**This** is the time when those who are separated think (of their lovers).’

veṅcuram **ariya allaman** namakkē ... kuṟumakaḷ koṇṇam celiṇē (aka.335:8-9, 26)
[**ariya alla** ‘they are not difficult’]
‘The hot forests **are certainly not difficult** (for me to pass through) if I go taking my young woman with me.’

²¹ Two forms, **marricinē** and **maṇum**, which occur in the following contexts, are interesting: **nī marricinē** ‘May you **thrive for ever**’ (pura.272:3) and poruḷ tīrattu avavu k kai viṭṭal atu **maṇum** poruḷē ‘Give up the desire for wealth; that is the wealth/substance **which prevails**’ (kali.14:18-19). They suggest that **man** has the force of a verb meaning ‘be established, to prevail, last for ever.’ Also it is possible that **maṇra** and **maṇ** are from the same root (**maṇ**) meaning ‘to prevail, last for ever.’

In one context, aṭṭu avalam aṇṇu **maṇa** (kali.108:8), **maṇa** is interpreted by a traditional commentator as expressing an adverbial sense ‘a great deal.’ See Naccinārkiṇiyar’s commentary on kali.108:8.

(‘however’)

nallār tam kōtaiyāl alaitta puṇ vaṭu k kāṭṭi aṇṇu iṇṇi varin ellā pulappēṇ
yāṇ **enpēṇman** a-n-nilaiyē avaṇ kāṇin kalappēṇ eṇṇum i-k-kaiyaṇ
neñcē (kali.67:6-9)

[**enpēṇ** ‘I say’ < **en** ‘to say’]

‘My Friend, I say that I shall sulk if he comes without love, showing the scars of the wound (on his body) which his (other) women caused by hitting him with their garlands. **However**, this heart (of mine) without (any) precept says that it would unite (with him) when I see him in that very state.’

(lamentation, expressing grief, reluctance)

ōṭi uytalum **kūṭuman** okkal vāḷkkai taṭkum mā kālē (pura.193:3-4)
[**kūṭum** ‘is possible’]

‘It is **possible** even to run away and survive, at the great time when life with kith and kin hinders you.’

(Another interpretation would be to take **man** as giving the sense of a rhetorical question.)

varuvīr ākutaḷ **uraimin** **mannō** ... **cenrōrman** eṇa irukkiṇpōrkkē
(aka.387:3, 20)

[**uraimin** ‘May you tell’; **cenrōr** ‘he left’]

‘**Tell** that you will return (soon) to those who would be waiting (patiently) thinking “**He has gone** (in search of wealth).” ’

ivaḷ aṇi vāṭa akanṇu nī ... poruḷ **muyariman** muyalvaḷavai ... vāḷnāḷum
nilaiyumō (kali.17:9-12)

[**muyari** ‘you are making an effort’ < **muyal** ‘to make an effort’]

‘You are making an effort to gather wealth, leaving her whose beauty is wilting (because of your imminent departure). Will the days of (her) life last as long as your effort (lasts)?’

(possibility; wonder)

uḷḷi varukuvar kollō uḷaintu yāṇ eḷḷi **irukkuvēṇmaṇkolō**

(kali.142:31-32)

[**irukkuvēṇ** ‘I will be’]

‘Will he return, thinking (of me)? Will I be waiting, scorning in agony?’

ceṇṇu yām ... pal ūḷ muyaṅkal **iyaivatu mannō tōḷi**

(aka.242:12, 16-17)

[**iyaivatu** ‘that which is possible’]

‘Is it possible to go and embrace (him) several times?’

(‘to prevail’)

ulakattōrē **palarmaṇ** celvar

(pati.38:1)

[**palar** ‘many people’]

‘Rich people in this world are many.’

kallā k kuṛaḷa kaṭum pakal vantu emmai illattu vā eṇa mey koḷḷi ellā

niṇ peṇṭir **uḷarmannō** kūṇu

(kali.94:14-16)

[**uḷ** ‘to exist’]

‘You, immature dwarf! In midday you come and grab my body saying “Come to my house.” Tell me, are there your (own) women, really?’

(reference to an earlier state)²²

akaṇ kaṇ vaippiṇ **nāṭuman** ... kuṭṭuvaṇ ... tāṇai paravā ūṅkē
(*pati.29:10, 14-15*)

[**nāṭu** ‘country’]

‘**They were** vast bountiful **countries**, before (the Cēra king) Kuṭṭu-
vaṇ’s army spread (there).’

vel vēl aṇṇal kāṇā ūṅkē niṇṇiṇum **pulliyēm manṇē** (*pura.141:7-8*)

[**pulliyēm** ‘we are poor’]

‘**We were poorer** than you before we met the noble one with a
victorious spear.’

yāṇum ... maṭa nallālai īṇra naṭpiṇku arulāṇ āyiṇum iṇ nakai muṇuval
ēlaiyai p paṇṇāḷ kūntal vāri nucuppu ivarntu ōmpiya nalam puṇai
utaviyum uṭaiyaṇ manṇē (*aka.195:5-10*)

[**utavi** ‘help’; **uṭai** ‘to have’]

‘Even if he is not kind (enough) for a friendship with me who gave
birth to the good young woman (he loves), (he must understand
that) **I helped** for that sweet smiling poor girl’s wellbeing by combing
her hair many days and protecting her by carrying her on my
waist.’

peru vaḷam paḷuni **naṭṭanai manṇō** muṇṇe ... paṇampē
(*pura.113:3-4, 7*)

[**naṭṭanai** ‘you befriended’ < **naḷ** ‘to befriend’]

‘O Paṇampu hill, great bounty having ripened (in your lands), **you**
befriended (many people) in the past.’

²² It has the overtones of lamentation, sympathy, and pity. The earlier state is described by a word/phrase in a separate clause.

maṇra:

(certainty)

puraiya maṇra puraiyōr kēṇmai

(narr.1:5)

[purai 'to be noble']

'Friendship with noble people is **certainly noble.**'vēlaṇ vēṇṭa vēṇi maṇai vantōy kaṭavuḷ āyiṇum āka **maṭavai maṇra**
... murukē (narr.34:9-11)'Murukaṇ, **you** who came to the place of the frenzied dance at the request of (your priest) Vēlaṇ, **are certainly gullible.**'

(It also has an overtone of pity.)

(expressing grief/pity; sympathy; self pity)

citaintatu maṇra nī civantaṇai nōkkaliṇ ... nal nāṭṭu ... kaviṇē

(pati.27:1, 15-16)

[citai 'to be destroyed']

'The beauty of the (enemy's) good country **is destroyed** (now) since you look at it angrily.'alkal **vantōṇ maṇra** kuṇṇa nāṭaṇ

(narr.114:5-6)

[var 'to come']

'The Nāṭaṇ from the mountainous country **came at night.**'kuyil ... ālum ... kālaiyum **akanrōr maṇra** nam maṇanticiṇōr

(narr.118:3-5)

[akal 'to go away, depart']

'He who has forgotten us **is away** from us even at the time when the cuckoo sings.'

(sarcasm)

nallārai k kāṇiṇ vilakki nayantu avar pal itaḷ uṇ kaṇṇum tōḷum pukal
pāṭa nallatu **kaṇṇittār maṇṇa** (kali.112:8-10)

[**kaṇṇi** ‘to make learn’ < **kal** ‘to learn’]

‘Well, they (also) taught (you) something good: to stop good women if you see them and to sing praises of their petal-like ensnaring eyes and shoulders.’

mā: See also “**kamā**” in “The Imperative/Optative.”

(adverbial)

paṇmā nāṭu keṭa (pati.83:6)

[**paṇ** < **pal(a)** ‘many’]

‘so that the (enemy) countries perish in many ways’

niṇ ... vāy pōl poymmoḷi evvam eṇ **kaḷaimā** (aka.3:13-14)

[**kaḷai** ‘to cure, get rid of’]

‘In what way would your false words, which are like truth, remove my distress?’

(expletive)

ōṭi uytaḷum kūṭumaṇ okkal vāḷkkai **taṭkumā kālē** (puṛa.193:3-4)

[**taḷ** ‘to hinder’; **kāl** ‘time’]

‘It is possible to run away and survive, at the great time when life with kith and kin hinders you.’

(It can also be understood as a rhetorical question.)

(optative; wish)

nanṇāḷ vēṅkaiyum **malarkamā** iṇi (narr.206:7)

[**malar** 'to bloom']

'Now, **may** the vēṅkai also **bloom** for the good day (of your wedding).'

mātu/mātō:

(certainty)

pala tīram peyarpavai **kēṭkuvir mātō** (malai:291)

[**kē** 'to hear']

'You will **definitely hear** (the noise made by) the animals which move around in different ways (on the mountain).'

mū-v-ēḷ ulakamum oru niḷal ākkiya **ēmattai mātō** (pari.3:75-76)

[**ēmattai** 'you have the protection' < **ēmam** 'protection, security']

'You **certainly are the one who protected** all the twentyone worlds by making them (come) under one shade.'

(lamentation; expressing grief, reluctance)

eḷil aḷiya vāṭum nāḷum **ninaival mātu** avar paṇpu eṇṇu ōvātu iṇaiyal

... tōḷi

(aka.171:3-5)

[**ninaī** 'to think']

'My friend, do not pine incessantly saying, "**I think** of his qualities even when my beauty is damaged and I am withering." '

ivai kāṇ tōṇṇu **nōvar mātō** aḷiyarō aḷiyar eṇ āyattōr (narr.12:7-8)

[**nōvar** 'they will suffer' < **no** 'to suffer']

'Pitiful are my companions. Whenever they look at these (things of mine), **they will be distressed.**'

anṇai pōla iṇiya kūṛiyum kaḷvar pōla k **koṭiyaṇ mātō** ... malaikiḷavōṇē
(*narr.28:3-4, 9*)

[**koṭu** 'to be bent, crooked']

'The mountain Chief is a cruel man like the thieves, although he says sweet things like a mother.'

tīyum vaḷiyum vicumpu payantāṅku **nōyum inṇamum ākinru mātō**
... nāṭaṇ malarnta mārpē (*narr.294:1-2, 9*)

[**nōy** 'sickness'; **inṇam** 'pleasure'; **ā** 'to be']

'O well, the wide chest of the man from the country side is becoming a pain and pleasure like the sky emitting fire and air (at the same time).'

(sarcasm; reluctance)

maṇṇappan mātō niṇ viṇal takaimaiyē (*narr.270:11*)

[**maṇa** 'to forget']

'I will forget your triumphant qualities.'

māḷa: It occurs only with the second person verb forms.

(wish)

arivai kāṇiya oru nāl **pūṇka māḷa** niṇ purai neṭum tēr (*pati.81:31-32*)

[**pūṇ** 'to wear, be decorated']

'May your excellent tall chariot be decorated some day so that the young woman could see it.'

vārār eṇṇum pulavi uṭkoḷal **olika māḷa** niṇ neṇcattāṇē (*narr.11:4-5*)

[**oli** 'to disappear; expel, remove']

'Expel/Remove from your heart the sulking that he (your lover) has not come.'

yāla: It is used only in the second person.

(address)

ponṇum maṇiyum pōlum **yāla** niṇ naṇṇar mēṇiyum nāru irum
katuppum (narr.166:1-2)
'your lovely body and good-smelling dark hair (which are) like gold
and gems'

collṇ col etir kollāy **yāla** niṇ tirumukam **iraiñci nāṇuti** (narr.39:1-2)
[**iraiñcu** 'to bow, hang'; **nāṇuti** 'you are bashful' < **nāṇ(u)** 'to feel
bashful']
'You do not accept (my) words if I talk. **You are hanging** your
lovely face and feeling bashful.'

(adverbial meaning 'well')

varuttam tīra **yāla** niṇ nala meṇ paṇaittōl **eytinam** (narr.9:3-4)
[**eytu** 'to reach, obtain']
'I **obtained** your lovely soft firm shoulders **so well** that my grief is
ended.'
(In this context, **yāla** might simply be an address form like **ila**
which occurs in *aka.12:3*. One can compare a similar form, **ēlē**
'hey', used in some dialects of modern Tamil.)

ADJECTIVES OR NOUN MODIFIERS¹

GENERAL: Adjectives tell us something about a latent or intrinsic quality of the nouns they qualify.² The function of the adjective is to bring out some potential quality of the noun it qualifies. The Tamil adjective

¹ The traditional name for an “adjective” is **peyaraṭai** ‘that which is adjacent to a noun’ or, simply, “modifiers.”

² Transient/acquired qualities of a noun can also be expressed by adjectival constructions, e.g., **cērkinra** kaṇ kaviṇ, literally ‘the beauty of (the process of) uniting that attracts the eye’ (*pari.22:35*). This type of “adjectives” contain a non-past/non-completive marker or a past/completive marker that is added to the stem. Some scholars hold that forms like **cērkinra** are not adjectives. For different views, see Veluppillai (pp.815-817). Constructions like **cērkinra** are treated in this study in the chapters which deal with adjectival participles.

Forms like **aḷakāṇa** ‘beautiful’ and **aḷakāy irukkira** ‘that which is beautiful’ which are derived by adding **āṇa** ‘that which is full of’ to nouns or **irukkira** ‘that which is/remains’ to an adverb ending with **āy** (< **ā** ‘to be’) are considered as “adjectives” in modern Tamil (cf. Arden:193). They are *not* attested in classical Tamil. For information on forms similar to **āṇa** (**āṇāṇ**, **āṇāḷ**, etc.), see “A Note On The Verb **āṇ**.”

always precedes the noun it qualifies and has to change its form into a noun if it has to follow the noun. It is semantically completed by a nominal in the sense that it makes complete sense only when interpreted along with the nominal it qualifies. The qualities expressed by the adjectives are not only binary but also spectral: antiquity, innateness, badness, brightness, color, darkness, depth, deixis, directionality, freshness, goodness, number, pleasantness, purity, rarity, shape, size, substantiality, subtlety, and the like. One could make further categories like “color adjectives,” “demonstrative adjectives,” etc.³

This study makes a formal distinction between the adjective, adjectival participle, and nominal compound in the following way: an adjective is a stem without a past/completive marker, non-past/non-completive marker, or a negative marker, and modifies a nominal; an adjectival participle is like an adjective in terms of its function, except that it contains a past/completive marker, non-past/non-completive marker, or a negative marker; a nominal compound contains an adjective/adjectival participle and a nominal. This chapter deals with adjectives which some modern scholars refer to as “mono-morphemic adjectives” — i.e., those which cannot be analyzed into smaller morphemes.⁴ See also “Nominal Compounds” in this study.

FORMATION: There are some nominal stems which precede and qualify nouns, which qualify as “adjectives.” In addition, most verb stems function as “adjectives” when they precede a noun. For example, **kol kaḷiru**, which has the structure verb stem **kol** ‘to kill’ + **kaḷiru** ‘male elephant’, can be understood as ‘killer elephant.’⁵ There are some adjec-

³ Only a random sample of classical Tamil adjectives is provided here.

⁴ For a classification of these adjectives, see Murugarathanam (pp.394-400).

⁵ Traditional grammarians would categorize **kol kaḷiru** as a **viṇaittokai** “compound denoting an action,” or even describe it as **kālam karanta peyar eccam** “nominal participle without any markers of time” (Naṇṇūl, Rule 364). In this study, forms like **kol**

tives which seem to be derived forms, resembling adjectival/relative participles. That is, there are “adjectives” like **periya** *kal* ‘large (amount of) toddy’ (*pura.235:2*) derived from ***per(u)** ‘to be big/large’ + **i** + **y** (glide) + **a**. In such forms the so-called “past marker” **i** does not really denote a past time, but only signifies the “completive aspect” or the “totality of the quality” signified by the stem. One might be tempted to suggest that forms like **periya** are corrupted forms of **perukiya** (**peruku** ‘to increase’ + **i** + **y** [glide] + **a**) and the like. Nevertheless, even in “adjectives” like **uyarnta** ‘tall’ or in **perutta** ‘large, be abundant’, the so-called “past markers” **nt** and **tt** do not signify a true past time, but only the totality of the quality signified by the stem.

There are “adjectives” like **val** ‘strong, capable’ and **kēl** ‘colorful’, from which other verb forms are derived in classical Tamil: e.g., *colla vallirrum ilan* ‘neither was he **capable of** expressing himself’ (*aka.32:15*) *vs.* **val vil** ‘**strong** bow’ (*kali.7:6*); *yālicai kēlittaṇṇa ... miṇṇiṟu ārppa* ‘honey bees sounding as if music **emerged** from the harp’ (*pari.8:22*) *vs.* *irum kēl vāya-p-puli* ‘dark **colored** strong tiger’ (*narr.217:3*); *tuṇ arūum takaiya kāṭu* ‘forest **difficult** to be approached’ (*kali.11:15*), **arūum** < ***ar(u)** ‘to be difficult.’

Examples like **periya**, **perutta**, **val**, **kēl**, and **aru** suggest that all adjectives may be derived from verb stems. The fact that case markers are never added to the adjectives strengthen this view. Neither person-number-gender distinction, nor a distinction between affirmative and negative is made by an adjective. An adjective does not vary in form according to the person, number, gender, and case of the noun it modifies. An adjectival noun can be derived from it. See “Adjectival Nouns or Appellative Nouns” for information on adjectival/appellative nouns, and the chapters on adjectival participles for the derivation of adjectival/relative participles. There are no

kalirū are considered to be of the structure: verb stem + noun; the stem **kol** is taken to function as an “adjective.”

comparative or superlative degrees of adjectives. For information on comparison, see "Comparison."

The Oblique Stem of an Adjective

The oblique stem of an adjective is obtained in one or a combination of the following ways: by lengthening the short vowel in the first syllable of the stem; by doubling the penultimate consonant in the stem; by adding to the stem a nasal homorganic with the initial **k**, **c**, **t**, or **p** of the following item; by adding **v** to certain stems; by changing the stem-final consonant; or by deleting the stem-final **u**. These changes are controlled by the shape of the stem. See "Morphophonemics" for examples of these changes.

EXAMPLES OF OBLIQUE STEMS OF ADJECTIVES

viṛaliyar ... nal meṇ **cīraṭi** (cīru:31-32)

[**cīraṭi** < **cīru** 'small' + **aṭi** 'feet']

'good, soft, and **small feet** of the (female) singers'

(Note that the short vowel in the first syllable of **cīru** is lengthened and the stem-final **u** is deleted.)

taṭantāḷ nārai (narr.91:4)

[**taṭantāḷ** < **taṭa** 'bent, crooked' + **n** + **tāḷ** 'leg'; **nārai** 'crane']

'crane with **bent legs**'

(Here, a nasal [**n**] homorganic with the initial consonant [**t**] of the noun following the stem is inserted between the stem and the following noun.)

cevvari k kayaloṭu pacciṛā p piṛalum mai irum kuṭṭattu

(*peru:270-271*)

[**cevvari** < **ce** ‘red’ + **v** + **vari** ‘stripes, lines’;

pacciṛā < **pacu** ‘fresh, wet, young’; **iṛā** ‘prawn, shrimp’]

‘in the large, deep, dark pond where **wet shrimps** and **red-striped** carps wallow’

(Note that in **cevvari** the consonant **v** is added to the stem in accordance with the initial consonant **v** of the following noun **vari**. Also note that the penultimate consonant **c** in **pacu** is doubled/hardened to produce the oblique stem **pacc** while deleting the stem-final **u**.)

EXAMPLES OF ADJECTIVES

Antiquity/Innateness/Customary:

tol ‘ancient, established, acknowledged’: **tol kuṭi** ‘**established** clan’

(*tiru:178*)

tol ‘innate’: **tol kaviṇ** ‘**inherent** beauty’

(*kali.2:28*)

tol ‘customary’: **tol paci** ‘**usual** hunger’

(*peru:253*)

Bad Quality/Cruelty⁶:

tī ‘cruel’: **tī neṇcattu** ‘with **cruel** heart’

(*pari.5:73*)

Brightness/Obviousness/Clarity:

oḷ ‘bright’: **oḷ eri** ‘**bright** flame’

(*puṛa.240:10*)

oḷ ‘obvious’: **oḷ icai** ‘well-known/**acknowledged** reputation’

(*pati.pati.8:10*)

oṇ ‘bright’: **oṇ katir** ‘**bright** rays’

(*kali.2:5*)

⁶ Also, **tīya** ‘bad’: **tīya kaluḷi** ‘**bad** frothy water’ (*kuṛu.327:4*). Note that **tīya** contains the suffix **a**.

Color:

karu(m) ‘black’: karum pukai ‘ black smoke’	(<i>ciru</i> :156)
ce(m) ‘red’: cem paral ‘ red pebbles’	(<i>aka</i> .133:3)
nīl ‘blue’: nīl niṛa vicumpu ‘ blue sky’	(<i>tiru</i> :116)
paccai ‘green’: paccai k kuṇḍalai p pacuntaṇṭu ‘fresh green stem of the kuṇḍalai’	(<i>pari</i> .11:101-102)
veḷ ‘white’: veḷ aruvi ‘ white waterfall’	(<i>ciru</i> :90)
veṇ kuruku ‘ white crane’	(<i>narr</i> .4:11)

Darkness:

iru(m) ‘dark, black’: irum katuppu ‘ dark hair’	(<i>narr</i> .387:1)
irum kuyil ‘ black cuckoo’	(<i>narr</i> .118:3)

Depth:

āl ‘deep’: āl tuyaram ‘deep/intense grief’	(<i>kali</i> .147:68)
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Deixis:

a ‘that’: a-k-kā ‘that grove’	(<i>kali</i> .92:28)
i ‘this’: i-k-karai ‘this end/edge/bank’	(<i>puṛa</i> .357:9)
u ‘yonder’: u-k-karai ‘The yonder end/edge/bank’ ⁷	(<i>puṛa</i> .357:9)

Directionality, Lateralness/Limitation⁸:

iṭa ‘left’: iṭa vayiṇ ‘on the left side’	(<i>ciru</i> :35)
kuṭa ‘western’: kuṭa pulam ‘ west land’	(<i>ciru</i> :47)
kuṇa ‘eastern’: kuṇa ticai ‘ eastern direction’	(<i>puṛa</i> .386:20)
teṇ ‘southern’: teṇ ticai ‘ southern direction’	(<i>pari</i> .10:121)
naṭu ‘middle, inside’: kēḷiviyuḷ naṭu ‘ center of the Vedas’	

⁷ **ukkarai** is interpreted as ‘that bank/edge’ by a traditional commentator: cf. U.V. Saminathier’s commentary.

⁸ See “Case Markers and Postpositions” for examples like **kaṭai** ‘end’, **mutal** ‘beginning’, etc.

- naṭu** ‘middle, center’: **yāṛru naṭu** ‘center of the river’ (*pari.2:25*)
vaṭa ‘northern’: **vaṭa malai** ‘northern mountain’ (*pari.4:67*)
vala(m) ‘right’: **valam puri vaḷai** ‘right spiralled conch’ (*paṭṭ:187*)
vala(m) ‘right’: **valam puri vaḷai** ‘right spiralled conch’ (*neṭu:142*)

Freshness, Newness:

- pacu(m)** ‘fresh’: **pacum puṇ** ‘fresh wound’ (*pati.61:1*)
putu ‘new, unknown’: **putu nāṇ** ‘new/unknown bashfulness’
(*aka.112:19*)

Goodness, Loveliness:

- nal** ‘good’: **nal īkai** ‘good beneficence’ (*narr.91:9*)
nal ‘lovely’: **nal tōḷ** ‘lovely shoulders/arms’ (*narr.131:9*)

Loftiness/Lowliness⁹:

- īḷi** ‘lowly’: **īḷi piṛappāḷaṇ** ‘he of a lowly birth’ (*pura.170:5*)

Novelty, Strangeness:

- vampu** ‘novel, odd, strange’: **vampa mākkal** ‘strange/new people’
(*narr.164:7*)

Number, Count¹⁰:

- mu** ‘three’: **mukkaṇṇāṇ** ‘He, with three eyes; Śiva’ (*kali.2:4*)
mū eyil ‘three fortresses’ (*kali.2:4*)

⁹ Cf. **uyarnta** ‘lofty/highly principled’: **uyarnta utavi** ‘noble help’ (*matu:743*). In most contexts, **uyarnta** signifies “loftiness” or “high principled-ness.” **īḷinta** ‘descended’: **īḷinta mīṇ** ‘fish which came down (the shore)’ (*kali.121:20*). The context is: *eṇi tirai tantu iṭa iḷinta mīṇ* ‘the fish which came down the shore as the tossing waves brought and dropped them.’ In most contexts, **īḷinta** signifies movement in a lower direction.

¹⁰ For other numerals, see “Numerals.”

Old Quality, Customary Quality:

paḷa(m) ‘old’: **paḷaṅ** kayiṟu ‘old rope’ (narr.284:10)

paḷa(m) ‘accustomed’: **paḷam** paci ‘accustomed hunger’ (peru:25)

Pleasantness, Preciousness, Cruelty, Unpleasantness:

in ‘pleasant’: **in** kālai ‘pleasant morning’ (narr.264:2)

in ‘precious, dear’: **in** uyir ‘dear/precious life’ (matu:403)

koṭu(m) ‘cruel, unpleasant’: **koṭum** col ‘unpleasant words’
(narr.200:11)

Purity:

tū ‘pure/naive’: **tūu** neṅcam ‘pure/naive heart/mind’ (kuṟu.157:2)

tū ‘clean’: **tū** uṭai ‘clean clothes’ (tiru:138)

Shape, Measure:

akal ‘wide’: **akal** māṟpu ‘wide chest’ (puṟa.255:2)

iru(m) ‘vast’: **irum** kaṭal ‘vast sea’ (matu:407)

iru(m) ‘large’: **irum** kiḷai ‘large/big extended clan’ (puṟa.173:9)

iru(m) ‘dense, deep’: **irum** kaṭaṟu ‘dense forest’ (puṟa.140:7)

uyar ‘high/tall’: **uyar** karai ‘high bank/shore’¹¹ (narr.91:2)

kuṟu(m) ‘short’: **kuṟum** tāḷ ēṟṟai ‘the male pig with short legs’
(puṟa.379:8)

koṭu ‘bent/crooked’: **koṭu** naṭai ‘crooked gait’ (peru:243)

koṭu ‘bent’: **koṭu** veṇ tiṅkaḷ ‘bent, white moon; crescent moon’
(aka.86:6)

ciṟu ‘little’: **ciṟu** varai ‘a little while’ (aka.136:22)

nīḷ ‘long’: **nīḷ** curam ‘long (stretched) forest’ (kali.145:14)

nīḷ ‘tall’: **nīḷ** kuṭai ‘tall parasol’ (puṟa.24:23)

neṭu ‘long’: **neṭu** neṟi ‘long route/path’ (peru:65)

¹¹ Compare **uyarnta** ‘high/tall’: **uyarnta** nel ‘tall rice paddy’ (puṟa.391:3).

neṭu 'tall': neṭu nilai 'tall entrance'	(<i>matu</i> :353)
nēr 'straight': nēr karai 'straight border' ¹²	(<i>puṛa</i> .392:14)
pakaṭu 'big, wide': pakaṭṭilai 'large, wide leaf'	(<i>puṛa</i> .392:13)
vaṭṭa 'round': vaṭṭa k kaḷaṅku 'round jacks'	(<i>aka</i> .241:14)
vaḷai 'bend': vaḷai talai 'head that is bending'	(<i>pati</i> .13:6)
viyal 'wide, vast': viyal vāṇam 'wide sky'	(<i>pari</i> .19:83)

Size:

ciṛu 'small': ciṛu mīṇ 'small fish'	(<i>peru</i> :303)
peru(m) 'big': perum kal 'big rock'	(<i>puṛa</i> .19:6)

Strength:

tiṇ 'strong, substantial': tiṇ cuvar 'strong wall'	(<i>matu</i> :667)
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Subtlety:

nuṇ 'fine, subtle': nuṇ eḷil 'fine beauty'	(<i>kali</i> .4:17)
no(y) 'fine': noy-n-nūl 'fine thread'	(<i>pari</i> .10:10)

Tenderness, Youth, Maturity, Old Quality:

iḷa(m) 'young, tender, soft': iḷam kaḷiṛu 'young male elephant'	(<i>kuṛu</i> .346:1)
mutir 'mature': mutir naṛavu 'mature nectar'	(<i>aka</i> .213:7)
mutu kaḷ 'mature toddy'	(<i>puṛa</i> .258:9)
mutu 'old': mutu cuvar 'old wall'	(<i>ciṛu</i> :133)

¹² Most contexts in which **nēr** occurs suggest that the term signifies 'agreeability, perfection.'

NUMERALS

GENERAL: Numerals are used to count items. "Nothingness" is the beginning unit measure found in classical Tamil. Names of numerals are available in this period for "nothing," 1/4, 1/2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and some beyond 10. Words for all the numbers are not available in the poems, so the statements made here are based on attested numerals. Most of the cited numerals are cardinal. Only one literary context (*pura.109:3-7*) which is given below indicates that there was a system of deriving ordinal numerals, but even this context is vague enough to give rise to different interpretations. The actual count for some of the attested numerals is unclear. These numerals indicate an "indefinitely large" amount. For example, the term **nūru**, which is normally interpreted as "a hundred," sometimes signified more than 100 items: **nūrruvar** 'The Hundred People' (*kali.52:2*) vs. **nūrritaḷ** t tamarai-p-pū 'lotus flower with **nūru** petals' (*aink.20:2*). Similarly, the term **āyiram** which is normally understood as referring to one thousand items, in fact, signified an indefinitely large number of items: **āyiram** katir nāyiru 'the sun with **āyiram** rays' (*pari.3:22*). All the numerals above 1/2 have two forms, one oblique or "adjectival,"

one nominal. In this study, the oblique or “adjectival” forms of numerals are referred to as their “oblique stems.”

FORMATION: The fractions have separate indivisible names. The names for other numerals are derived forms. Except for 0, 1/4, 1/2, 4, 6, and 7, names of the numerals below 100 and are not multiples of ten have the suffix **tu** added to their respective roots or stems. These name are given below. Larger numerals are formed by adding the noun form of the last digit to the oblique stem(s) of the preceding digit(s). In doing so, 1, 10, 100, 1,000, 10,000, etc., seem to be the “count” signified by the successive digits which are reckoned from right to left. If there are more than three items involved, the structure is: root/oblique + oblique + noun.

However, there seems to be more than one way of deriving the large numerals. For example, **patinorumūvar** ‘33 persons’ (*tiru:167*) is derived from **patin** oblique of **patu** + **oru** oblique of **onru** + **mūvar**. While **patinorumūvar** is construed as “eleven times 3,” **nārpattōnpatu** (< **nāl** root + **patt** oblique of **patu** + **onpatu**) ‘49’ (*pura.201:11*) is understood as “four times ten plus nine.” In another context, ‘18’ is expressed as **onpatirru iratti** ‘doubled nine’ (*tiru:168*). Since a complete set of numerals is not available, it is difficult to deduce the system of numeral derivation in classical Tamil and one has to be content with the examples.

See “Pronouns” for numerical pronouns derived from the numerals.

EXAMPLES OF CARDINAL NUMERALS

Fractions and cardinal numerals from 0 up to 10:

count	word	oblique stem
0	pāl ‘nothingness’	(not attested)
1/4	kāl (<i>pari.3:77</i>)	(not attested)
1/2	pāku (<i>pari.3:77</i>)	(not attested)

1	onru (<i>pari.3:77</i>)	oru (<i>puṛa.121:1</i>) ōr (<i>kuṛu.277:3</i>)
2	iraṇṭu (<i>pari.3:78</i>)	iru (<i>pari.3:75</i>) īr (<i>puṛa.2:15</i>)
3	mūnru (<i>pari.3:78</i>)	mū (<i>pari.3:75</i>)
4	nālku (<i>peru.489</i>)	nāl (<i>pari.3:80</i>)
4	nāṅku (<i>pari.3:78</i>)	nāṅ (<i>aka.181:16</i>)
5	aintu (<i>pari.3:78</i>)	ai (<i>aka.48:17</i>)
6	āru (<i>pari.3:79</i>)	aṛu (<i>naṛṛ.202:9</i>)
7	ēl (<i>pari.3:79</i>)	ēl (<i>pari.3:75</i>) eḷu (<i>ciṛu.113</i>)
8	eṭṭu (<i>pari.3:79</i>)	eṇ (<i>puṛa.87:3</i>)
9	onpatu (<i>aka.125:20</i>)	onpatirru (<i>tiru.168</i>) onpatin (<i>pati.pati.5:19</i>)
9	toṇṭu (<i>pari.3:79</i>)	
10	pattu (<i>puṛa.18:5</i>)	patt ... (<i>kali.136:6</i>) patirru (<i>pari.3:40</i>) patin (<i>tiru.167</i>) pan (<i>tiru.118</i>)

Cardinal numerals beyond ten:

count	word	oblique stem
?	āmpal (<i>pari.2:13</i>) (basically, āmpal is the name of a kind of water lily)	
1,000?	āyiram (<i>pari.3:41</i>)	āyira ‘thousand and ...?’ (<i>pati.63:20</i>)
?	ūli (<i>pati.63:20</i>)	

?	kamalam (<i>pari.2:14</i>) (kamalam , also lotus flower)	
?	kuvaḷai (<i>pari.2:13</i>) (basically, kuvaḷai is the name of a flower)	
?	kōṭi (<i>pura.18:5</i>) (literally means ‘the end/last’)	
?	caṅkam (<i>pari.2:13</i>) (basically refers to a conch or shell)	
100	nūru (<i>pura.184:3</i>) nūr̥ru (<i>pari.3:40</i>) (as a verb it means ‘to powder’ <i>pati.66:5</i>)	
100,000?	nūr̥āyiram (<i>pari.3:43</i>)	
?	neytal (<i>pari.2:13</i>) (basically, neytal is the name of a kind of water lily)	
10,000?	patināyiram (<i>pari.3:42</i>)	
multitude	maṇpatu (<i>pari.3:9</i>)	
?	veḷḷam (<i>pari.2:14</i>) (basically, veḷḷam refers to the flood)	veḷḷa (<i>pati.63:20</i>)

ORDINAL NUMERALS

The terms for the ‘first’, ‘middle/next’, and the ‘last’ are **mutal**, **iṭai**, and **kaṭai** respectively (*pari.3:71*). No conclusive method of deriving the ordinal numerals could be found, because there are only a very few contexts where items are treated serially. When items are reckoned by adding the suffix **ē** to the cardinal numeral, the resulting words appear as ordinal numerals:

pāriyatu paṇampē ... nāṇku payaṇ uṭaittē
 ‘The Chieftain Pāri’s Paṇampu hill has four (types of) produce.’
onrē ciṇiyilai vetiriṇ nel viḷaiyummē
 ‘**First**, grain grows inside the vetir-bamboo.’
iraṇṭē tīṇcuḷai p palaviṇ paḷam ūḷkummē
 ‘**Second**, sweet jack fruits ripen (there).’
mūnrē koḷuṇkoṭi vaḷḷi k kiḷaṇku vīḷkummē
 ‘**Third**, the lush vaḷḷi-tuber grows (there).’
nāṇkē ... tiṇi neṭum kuṇṇam tēṇ coriyummē
 ‘**Fourth**, ... honey flows down the tall dense hill.’
 (pura.109:3-7)

Here, **onrē**, **iraṇṭē**, **mūnrē**, and **nāṇkē** have been interpreted by traditional commentators as ordinal numerals: ‘first’, ‘second’, ‘third’, and ‘fourth.’ Note that the order ‘first’, ‘second’, etc. presented in this literary context does not reflect a priority sequence.

COLLECTIVES AND UNIVERSALS

GENERAL: In classical Tamil, some forms, which are to be treated as nominals, provide a sense of “totality” to nouns or “universality” to an action. There are two types: the “collective” type referring to groups of entities denoted by nouns, and the “universal” type signifying repetitive occurrence or open-endedness of an action.¹ The “collective” type is similar to the significance of “all and every,” whereas the “universal” type is similar to “any” or “every” in English. The negative type of these forms gives the sense “none,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” etc.

FORMATION: The notions of totality and universality are expressed by periphrasis. All these constructions are completed by **(u)m**, which provides a “completive” or an “inclusive” sense.

In the “collective” type, there are two structural possibilities: one is to place a quantifier to the left of the noun and to follow the noun with **um**

¹ Cf. Lindholm and Paramasivam (1980, Volume II:78, 90) for a similar usage in modern Tamil.

resulting in the structure: quantifier + noun + **um**²; another is to have the structure: noun + quantifier + **um**. The quantifier is a nominal, like a noun or numeral.

The quantifiers **ellā** 'all', **ellīr**, **ellār**, and **ellōr** which are completed by (**u**)**m** resulting in the forms **ellām** 'everything', **ellīrum** 'everyone (second person)', **ellārum** 'everyone (third person)', and **ellōrum** 'everyone (third person)' do not have to have a noun preceding them.

When the quantifier precedes and the suffix **um** follows the noun, the noun is to be understood as plural although there is no overt plural marker added to it. When the quantifier and the suffix **um** follow the noun, the latter is singular as a group or is to be understood as a collective entity.

The universal type expressing a repetitive occurrence of an action is formed by adding **um** to a nominal referring to a time unit. It precedes the action it modifies. In the universal type signifying open-endedness of an action, there are the following possibilities: one is to place an interrogative word to the left of the noun/verb and to follow the noun/verb with **um** resulting in the structure interrogative word + noun/verb + **um**; another is to have the structure: interrogative word + **um** + noun/verb.

The negative meaning of the collectives and the universals, used for open-ended exclusion, is expressed by completing the clause in which they occur by a negative verb. The numeral **onru** 'one thing' and the numeral personal pronouns **oruvan** 'one man (non-honorific)', **orubar** 'one person (honorific)' are also used in a similar way as are the interrogative words to express the negative meaning of the universals. The only difference is that the main verb in the same clause as **onrum**, **oruvanum**, or **orubarum**

² Here, one might recall the linguistic terminology "discontinuous morpheme." For the use of a numeral signifying a collective set of items, see the examples of **um** presented in "The Particles."

is always negative, while the main verb in the same clause as an interrogative word (e.g., **yārum**) may be positive or negative.

In all the above situations, should there be a case marker or a postposition, it precedes the suffix **um**.

EXAMPLES

Collectives:

Structure and Example

anaittum:

(quantifier **anaittu** + **um**)

tīyinuḷ teṛaḷ nī pūvinuḷ nārṛam nī ... **anaittum** nī anaittin uṭporuḷum nī
(*pari.3:63-68*)

[**anaittu** 'that which is of that nature; something of that nature']

'You are the destruction in the fire. You are the fragrance in the flowers. You are **everything (of that nature)**. You are the inner substance of everything (of that nature).'

anaittu __ um:

(quantifier **anaittu** + noun + **um**)

tīyinuḷ teṛaḷ nī pūvinuḷ nārṛam nī ... anaittum nī **anaittin uṭporuḷum**
nī (pari.3:63-68)

[**anaittin** oblique of **anaittu**; **uṭporuḷ** 'inner substance']

'You are the destruction in the fire. You are the fragrance in the flowers. You are everything (of that nature). You are **the inner substance of everything (of that nature)**.'

iraṇṭum:(demonstrative adjective + numeral **iraṇṭu + um**)

pōrēṇṇu aruntalai aṇcalum āycciyar kārikai t tōḷ kāmuraṭalum **iv**
iraṇṭum ōrāṅku c cēṇal ilavō (kali.106:40-42)

[iv 'these'; **iraṇṭu** 'two']

'Don't **both of these**, (namely) fearing the difficult head of the fighting bull and desiring the dark beautiful shoulders of the shepherdess, (ever) combine together?'

ellām:(quantifier **ellā + um**)

ēe teḷintēm yām kāyāti **ellām** val ellā ... varuntal niṇ vaṇcam
 uraiṭṭu (kali.89:7, 9)

'Hey, hey! You, who are capable of **everything**, do not grieve about your deceit. We are sure (of your deceit).'

(Note that the quantifier **ellām** is not preceded by a noun.)³

(noun + quantifier **ellā + um**)

pulavar ellām niṇ nōkkiṇarē (puṇa.42:20-21)

[pulavar 'poets']

'**All the poets** look(ed) up to you.'

(noun + quantifier **ellā + um**)

poṅkiru **munṇīr akam ellām** nōkkiṇai tiṅkaḷuḷ tōṇṇi irunta kuṇumuyāl
 (kali.144:17-18)

[munṇīr akam 'inside the ocean']

³ Note that the **ellā** in ellām val **ellā** 'You, who are capable of everything' is an address form used in classical Tamil to a male or a female.

‘O little hare residing in the moon, you looked **everywhere in the vast upsurging ocean** (for my lover).’

ellā __ um:

(quantifier **ellā** + noun + glide + **um**)

ellā maṇai-y-um kallenṛaṇavē (*puṛa.296:3*)

[**maṇai** ‘house’]

‘**All the houses** made a big noise sounding “kal” .’

(quantifier **ellā** + noun + case marker + **um**)

vāṇ kaṇ māṇiṇum ... nilam vaḷam karappiṇum **ellā uyir-kk-um** illāl
vāḷkkai (*puṛa.203:1, 2-3*)

[**uyir** ‘life’]

‘Even if the sky changes its place (of rainfall) or the land holds on to its bounty, there is no living/thriving **for all the lives.**’

ellārum:

(quantifier **ellār** + **um**)

ellārum aṛiya nōy ceytaṇavē ... kaṇṇē (*kuṛu.72:2, 5*)

‘(My lover’s) eyes made me (love)sick making **everyone** know.’

(Note that the quantifier **ellārum** is not preceded by a noun.)

ellār __ um:

(quantifier **ellār** + case marker + **um**)

nellum nīrum **ellārkkum** eḷiya (*puṛa.58:10*)

[**ellārkkum** < **ellār** + **kk** + **um**]

‘Rice and water are easy (to get) **for everyone.**’

(Note that **ellārkkum** is not preceded by a noun to be quantified.)

(quantifier **ellār** + noun + **um**)

mutukāṭu ... **ellār puṛaṇ-um** tāṇ kaṇṭu ... taṇ puṛam kāṇpōr k
kāṇpu aṛiyātē (*puṛa.356:4, 7, 9*)

[**puṛaṇ** ‘back’]

‘Having seen **everyone’s back**, this ancient (cremation) ground,
does not know anyone who has seen its back.’

(quantifier **ellār** + noun + glide + **um**)

‘**ellār māvum** vantaṇa (*puṛa.273:2*)

[**mā** ‘horse’]

‘**Everyone’s horses** returned.’

(noun + quantifier **ellār** + case marker + **um**)

nī cellā viṭuvāyēl ... neṭṭirum kūntal **kaṭavuḷar ellārkkum** muṭṭuppāṭu
ākalum uṇṭu⁴ (*kali.93:33, 35-36*)

[**kaṭavuḷar** ‘gods’]

‘If you let go without going (there), there might even be an obstacle
for all the gods with long dark hair.’

‘If you don’t go there, your women will be in trouble.’

(noun + **ellār** + postposition + **um**)

celvar ellārullum niṇṇ nal icai mikumē⁵ (*pati.38:1-2*)

[**celvar** ‘wealthy people’]

‘**Among all the wealthy people**, your good reputation excels.’

⁴ See “The Conditional” for a discussion of **cellā viṭuvāyēl** in this example.

⁵ One may also consider **ullum** as a postposition by itself.

ellīrum:(quantifier **ellīr** + **um**)**ellīrum** eṇ ceytīr enṇai nakutirō (kali.142:15)‘What did **you all** do? Are you laughing at me?’(Note that the quantifier **ellīrum** is not preceded by a noun.)**ellōr __ um:**(quantifier **ellōr** + case marker + **um**)**ellōrkkum** koṭumati ... kumaṇaṇ nalkiya vaḷaṇē (pura.163:7, 9)[**ellōrkkum** < **ellōr** + **kk** + **um**]‘Give **everyone** the bounty that Kumaṇaṇ gave us.’(Note that the quantifier **ellōrkkum** is not preceded by a noun.)**ai __ um:**(numeral **ai** + nominal + **um**)āṅku **aimpāl tiṇaiyum** kaviṇi (matu:325-326)[**ai** ‘five’; **pāl** ‘section’; **tiṇai** ‘landscape’]‘as **all the five landscapes** there attained abundant/fascinating beauty’**aintum:**(nouns + **aintu** + **um**)**tī vaḷi vicumpu nilaṇ nīr aintum** ṇāyirum tiṅkaḷum aṇaṇum aivarum
... māyōy niṇ vayiṇ parantavai uraittēm (pari.3:4-5, 10)[**tī** ‘fire’; **vaḷi** ‘wind’; **vicumpu** ‘sky’; **nilaṇ** ‘the earth’; **nīr** ‘water’]‘O Dark One, we spoke of **all the five**, (namely) **the fire, the wind, the sky, the earth, and the water**, and of the sun, the moon, Duty, and the five (planets) etc., (all of) which have spread (out) from you.’

aivarum:(numeral personal pronoun **aivar** + **um**)

tī vaḷi vicumpu nilaṇ nīr aintum ṇāyiṇum tiṅkaḷum aṇaṇum **aivarum**
 ... māyōy niṇ vayiṇ parantavai uraittēm (*pari.3:4-5, 10*)
 ‘O Dark One, we spoke of all the five, (namely) the fire, the wind,
 the sky, the earth, and the water, and of the sun, the moon, Duty,
 and **the five** (planets) etc., (all of) which have spread (out) from
 you.’

currum:

(curru + um)

curunkaiyiṇ āyattār **currum** eṇintu kurumpai mulai p paṭṭa pūṇr
 (*pari.16:20-21*)

[**currum** ‘all around’]

‘the red water from the bellows which her friends threw **all around**
 and splashed on her budding breasts’

mulutum:(noun + **mulutu** + **um**)

kalai toṭu perum paḷam puṇ kūṇtu ūṇaliṇ **malai mulutum** kamaḷum
 māṭiram (*malai:292-293*)

[**malai** ‘mountain’]

‘the directions which smell good **all over the mountain** due to the
 honey from the big (jack) fruit which oozes because the monkey(s)
 scoop(s) them’

Universals:

Structure and Example

alkalum:

(time word **alkal** + **um** + verbal noun)

kāṇam emmoṭu kaḷintaṇar āyiṇ ... **alkalum aḷutal** mēvala āki p paḷi
tīr kaṇṇum paṭukuva (aka.11:6,7, 13-15)

[**aḷutal** ‘crying’]

‘If he had passed the forest with us, (our) flawless eyes would not cry **every night**, and would get some sleep too.’

e __ um:

(interrogative **e** + noun + **um**)

nal ēru koḷpavar allāl tiru mā mey tīṇṭalar eṇṇu ... **eppoḷutum** collāl
tarappaṭṭavaḷ (kali.102:9-12)

[**poḷutu** ‘time’; **eppoḷutum** < **e** + **poḷutu** + **um**]

‘She is someone who is brought (here to the arena) **always** telling (everyone) that except those who take hold of the good bull (in the bull raid) no one can touch her.’

kokkiṇ ... toḷuti ... nāraiyoṭu **evvāyum** kavara (neṭu:15, 17)

[**vāy** ‘section, region’; **evvāyum** < **e** + **vāy** + **um**]

‘as the flock of cranes together with the herons took over / covered **every region**’

(interrogative **e** + glide + noun + noun + glide + **um**)

e v vakai c ceyti y um (matu:516)

[**vakai** ‘type, kind’; **ceyti** ‘doing; work’;

e v vakai c ceyti y um

< e + v (glide) + vakai + ceyti + y (glide) + um]
 ‘any kind of work’

enrum:

(interrogative **enru** + **um** + verb)

enrum cellēn avan̄ kuṇṇu keḷu nāṭṭē (pura.394:18)

‘I will not go any day to his country filled with hills.’

‘I will never go to his hilly country.’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative. The main verb in the sentence is negative: **cellēn** ‘I will not go.’)

ennatūum:

(interrogative **ennatu** + **um** + verb)

innicai aruvi p pāṭum **ennatūum kēṭṭiyō** ... annai (aka.68:3-4)

[**ennatu** ‘of any kind’; **kēṭṭiyō** ‘Did/Do you hear?’]

‘Mother, did you hear the pleasant music of the waterfall and any (such) thing?’

‘Mother, did you hear the pleasant music of the waterfall or any thing similar?’

ennalum:

(interrogative **ennal** + **um** + verbal noun)

ennalum pariyalō ilam (narr.150:6)

[**ennal** ‘of any amount’; **pariyal** ‘feeling sorry’]

‘We do not feel sorry in any amount.’

‘We do not feel sorry even a little.’

en(n)ai __ um:(interrogative **ennai** + verb + **um**)

ennai nī **ceyyinūm** uraittīvār il vaḷi munṇaṭi p paṇintu emmai uṇarttiya
varuti maṇ (kali.73:14-15)

[**ennai** ‘anything’; **ceyyin** conditional < **cey** ‘to do’]

‘Whatever (wrong) **you do**, when there is no one to tell you kindly (about it), you come to fall at my feet and make up for my sulking.’

(interrogative **enai** + noun + **um**)

paci alaikkum pakai oṇru eṇkō ... kūḷiyar parantu alaikkum pakai
oṇru eṇkō āṅku **enai p pakaiyum** aṇiyunaṇ āy

(pura.136:9, 13-15)

[**enai** ‘any’; **pakai** ‘hostility, enmity’]

‘Shall I say that there is an enemy, namely, hunger which tosses (me) around? Shall I say that there is an(other) enemy, namely, the highway robbers who toss (me) around? Āy knows **any** (kind of these) **enemies**.’

enaittum:(interrogative **enaittu** + **um** + noun)

kaṭumā kaṭavuṇūm kōl pōl **enaittum koṭumai** ilai (kali.50:19-20)

[**enaittu** ‘of any kind’; **koṭumai** ‘cruelty’]

‘You **have no cruelty** like the whip which goads a rushing horse.’

‘You are not at all cruel like the whip which rushes a horse which is already running fast.’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of the negative verb **ilai**.)

enaittu __ um:(interrogative **enaittu** + case marker + **um** + verb)ūrīr **enaittānum eḷḷinum** eḷḷalaṅ kēḷvaṅ (kali.145:51-52)[**enaittu** 'of any kind'; **eḷḷu** 'to despise']'O people of the town, **even if you despise me to any amount**, my lover-friend will not despise me.'(interrogative **enaittu** + numeral + **um** + noun)iṇṇuyir aṇṇārku **enaittu onrum tītu** iṇmai eṇ uyir kāṭṭātō (kali.143:20-21)[**onru** 'one thing'; **tītu** 'danger']'Will my life not make it clear that there is **no danger** for the man who is like my sweet life?'(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of **iṇmai**.)**oruvarum:**(numeral pronoun **oruvar** + **um** + verb)palar kuṟai ceyta ... aṇṇārku **oruvarum illai** māto (pura.311:4-5)[**oruvar** 'one person'; **illai** 'there is not']'Alas, for the noble man who fulfilled the needs of many, **there is not a single person** (to help now).'(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of **illai**.)**oruvar __ um:**(numeral pronoun **oruvar** + case marker + **um** + verb)**oruvarkkum poyyā** niṇ vāyil cūḷ vauval (pari.8:84)[**oruvar** 'one person'; **poy** 'to lie']'Do not grab an oath in your mouth **which normally does not lie to anyone**.'

onrum:(noun + numeral **onru** + **um**)**piḷai onrum** kāṇāṇ toḷutu piḷai kēṭkum tūyavaṇ (*pari.12:60-61*)[**piḷai** ‘error’; **onru** ‘one thing’]‘the innocent man who did not see **any error** (in what he did) and asks (his lover) about the mistake (he supposedly committed)’(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of the negative verb in the clause: **kāṇāṇ** ‘He did not see.’)**nāḷum:**(day word **nāḷ** + **um** + verb)**nāḷum eṇ** neṇcu **piṇi k koṇṭa** aṇcilōti p perum tōḷ kuṟu makaḷ(*kuṟu.280:1-3*)[**piṇikkoḷ** ‘to hold tightly’]‘the young woman with big shoulders and a few soft tresses **who took hold** of my heart **forever**’**yā __ um:**(interrogative **yā** + noun + **um**)iṭi umiḷ vāṇam nīṇki **yāṇkaṇum** kuṭi pati p peyarnta ... mutu pāl(*aka.77:5-6*)[**kaṇ** ‘place’; **yāṇkaṇum** < **yā** + **kaṇ** + **um**]‘the arid land from which the residents have moved away in **every direction**, as the thundering clouds left (without raining)’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

yāṅkum:(interrogative **yāṅku** + **um** + verb)**yāṅkum** ariyavum **uḷavō** niṇakkē(*puṟa.56:15-16*)

[uḷa ‘there are’]

‘**Is there** anything difficult for you (to accomplish), **anywhere?**’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

yāṅkum itaṇiṇ koṭiyatu piṇitu oṇṇu illai (narr.322:1-2)

[illai ‘there is not’]

‘**Nowhere is anything** more cruel than this.’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative.)

yāṅkum iravu iṇantu ellai tōṇṇalatu (narr.378:5-6)

[tōṇṇalatu ‘does not appear’]

‘The **light/sun does not appear anywhere**, exceeding the darkness.’

‘Nowhere does the light/sun appear, overcoming the darkness.’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative.)

yāṇṭōrum:

(oblique of noun + interrogative yāṇṭōr + um)

viyaṇ ṇālattu yāṇṭōrum toḷutu ēttum iraṅku icai muraciṇāy (kali.100:5-6)

[ṇālattu oblique of ṇālam ‘the earth’]

‘O man with a low sounding drum, whom **people from anywhere** in this vast earth praise and worship’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

yātum:

(interrogative yātu + um + noun)

yātum ūrē yāvarum kēḷir (pura.192:1)

[ūr ‘town’]

‘**Every town is our town.** Everyone is our kin.’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

(noun + interrogative **yātu** + **um**)

eṇ **tīram yātum** viṇaval (kali.19:10)

[**tīram** ‘goodness, nature’]

‘Do not enquire **anything about me.**’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of the negative imperative/optative **viṇaval** ‘do not enquire.’)

yātu ____ **um**:

(noun + interrogative **yātu** + **onru** + **um**)

attam naṇṇiya nātu keḷu peru viṇal **kaipporuḷ yātonrum** ilaṇē (pura.313:1-2)

[**kaipporuḷ** ‘thing in hand; wealth’; **onru** ‘one thing’]

‘The great skillful man with a claim for many countries, who proceeded toward the forest, does not have **anything in his hands.**’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative.)

yār ____ **um**:

(interrogative **yār** + case marker + conditional + **um** + noun)

makaḷirai maintuṟṟu amaruṟṟa maintar akalam kaṭikuvēm eṇpavai
yārkkānum muṭiporuḷ anru (pari.20:91-93)

[**yārkkānum** < **yār** + **kku** + **āyin** + **um**; **muṭiporuḷ** ‘thing that is possible’]

‘**It is not possible for anyone** to say that they would renounce the chests of their young men who, because of their youth, desired other women.’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of **anru** ‘it is not.’ See “A Note on the Verb **ān**” for a discussion of the contracted form **ānum** < **āyinum**.)

yāraiyum:(interrogative **yārai** + glide + **um** + verb)**yārai eluva yārē nī emakku yāraiyum allai notumalāṇai**

(naṟṟ.395:1-2)

[**allai** ‘you are not’]‘Hey, who are you? Actually, who are you to us? **You are nobody** (to us). You are a stranger.’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative.)

yāvatum:(noun + interrogative **yāvatu** + **um**)**iṭumpai yāvatum aṟiyā iyalpiṇar**

(tiru:135-136)

[**iṭumpai** ‘suffering’]‘people who have the nature of not knowing **any suffering**’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative.)

yāvarum:(interrogative **yāvar** + **um** + noun)**yātum ūrē yāvarum kēḷir**

(puṟa.192:1)

[**kēḷir** ‘kinsmen’]‘Every town is our town. **Everyone is our kin.**’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

(interrogative **yāvar** + **um** + verb)**yāvarum viḷaiyum polantoṭi p putalvaṇ**

(aka.16:5)

[**viḷai** ‘to like, long for’]‘(his) son, wearing gold bracelets, **whom everyone desires**’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

yāvir __ um:(interrogative **yāvir** + verb + **um**)**yāvir āyiṇum** kūlai tār koṇṭu yām porutum eṇṇal ōmpumiṇ

(puṇa.88:1-2)

[ā ‘to be’; **āyiṇum** < conditional of ā + **um**]‘**Whoever you are**, stop thinking that you could fight (with him) with your front line and back line warriors.’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

yāvīrum:(interrogative **yāvir** + **um** + verb)**yāvīrum** em kēḷvar k **kāṇīrō**

(kali.145:61)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’]⁶‘**Did anyone** see my husband?’

(Note that the sense expressed is affirmative.)

yāvaiyum:(noun + interrogative **yāvai** + glide + **um**)neyttōr niṇa arakkiṇ **nīr ekki yāvaiyum** muttu nīr c cāntu aṭainta
mūuy t tatti

(pari.10:12-13)

[**nīr ekki** ‘water sprinkler’]‘packing **all the sprinklers**, which spray lacquer-like blood-red water, in the box containing sandal paste mixed in fragrant cool water’

⁶ In modern Tamil, it would be **yārāvatu** or **yārum** instead of **yāvīrum** in a context like this: **yārāvatu** eṇ kaṇavaṇai p pārttīrkaḷā? **yārum** eṇ kaṇavaṇai p pārttīrkaḷā? ‘Did anyone see my husband?’

(interrogative **yāvai** + glide + **um** + noun)

yāvaiyum cenru **cēkkallā p puḷḷa** ... viyaṇ kuḷam (*aka.42:7-8, 9*)

[**cēkkallā p pul** ‘birds which would not reach/arrive ... and stay’]

‘wide ponds where **no birds would** go and **stay**’

vaikalum:

(day word **vaikal** + **um** + verb)

vaikalum valci iṇmaiyaṇ vāyaṇ vāyaṇ **māri** (*puṛa.211:17-18*)

[**vaikal** ‘day, daybreak’; **māru** ‘to change’]

‘**changing** from place to place **every day** because of lack of food
(available in any one place)’

NOMINAL COMPOUNDS¹

GENERAL: The term “compound” in modern linguists’ terminology refers to a combination of nouns, which is not divisible into parts and the sum total of which is not the same as any of its individual parts.² This

¹ The traditional term for a compound is **tokai** ‘combining; putting together.’

² One wonders whether the traditional **anmolittokai** (= **bahuvrīhi** in Sanskrit), which is based on the technique of metonymy, is the only true Tamil compound in the Western sense of the term. See “Metonymy and Metaphor” for an example of **anmolittokai**.

Cf. Zvelebil (1967:103): “The classification of compounds in traditional grammars is a blend of formal and semantic criteria. Cf. Tol. S.895 ff. which gives six kinds of compounds (*vēṭṭumai*, *uvamai*, *viṇai*, *paṇpu*, *ummai*, *aṇmoli*). However, let us consider, e.g., the phrase *paṇaittōḷ*, bamboo (like) shoulders; according to traditional grammars, this is an *uvamaittokai*, a kind of compound expressing comparison. According to modern linguistic thought it is no compound. First, the phrase is divisible: *paṇai men tōḷ* “soft bamboo (like) shoulders” may occur; second, no new meaning is coined here; the meaning of the phrase *paṇaittōḷ* is more or less equivalent to the sum of the meanings of its two parts, *paṇai* and *tōḷ*. No **sandhi** changes (like the lengthening of the initial *t* - of *tōḷ* in *paṇaittōḷ*) are diagnostic; they occur identically in phrases and compound-like units. On the other hand, *puṇkaṇ* s. sorrow, meanness, etc., is a compound, since it functions like a

study draws a structural distinction between “nominal compounds” and “noun phrases” in the following way. The nominal compound is made of stems, whereas the noun phrase contains at least one member which is a participle.³ Nominal compounds are like nouns and therefore can be

single free form; it is indivisible (a phrase like **puṇ kaṭuṇ kaṇ* does not occur, but a phrase like *kaṭuṇ puṇkaṇ* “severe, cruel poverty” might), and it has acquired, as a compound, new meaning which is not identical with the sum of the meanings of its two components.”

See also Zvelebil’s (1967:40, 103, 104) detailed discussion on the dilemma of the modern linguist about the category of “nominal compound” in Tamil. He says, for example:

“According to Bloch and Trager, if no formal characteristics can be discovered for distinguishing between compounds and phrases, then there are only phrases and not compounds in a given language.

“It is extremely difficult to draw a hard and fast line between phrases and compounds, since phrases in Tamil (especially O[ld] T[amil]) are often constructions of mere stems” (1967:104).

It may be noted that in the Tamil tradition, not only **paṇaittōl** (quoted above) but also items like **paṇai meṇ tōl** (quoted above) are considered to be “compounds.” A traditional commentator gives a similar example for a compound: **maḷai vaṇ kai** ‘rain (like) bounteous hands’ (cf. Cēṇāvaraiyar’s commentary on Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Rule 414). The present chapter in this study follows the tradition.

³ Examples:

Compound

pukar muka vēḷam ‘elephant with a speckled face’ (aka.12:11)

Here, none of the members (**pukar** ‘speck’; **mukam** ‘face’; **vēḷam** ‘elephant’) is a participle.

aṇattu k kai ‘lifted trunk of an elephant’ (pari.20:105)

[**aṇatt(u)** mutated stem < ***aṇam** < **aṇṇam** ‘roof of the mouth’; **kai** ‘hand’]

pakuttūṇ ‘food to be shared; shared food’ (pati.38:15)

[**pakutt** past stem < **paku** ‘to divide’]

Noun phrase

nīṇṭu akanra kaṇṇāḷ (pari.11:46)

[**nīṇṭu** advp < **nī** ‘to extend’; **akanra** adjp < **akal** ‘wide’; **kaṇ** ‘eye(s)’]

‘the woman with eyes which are long and wide’

declined. That is, the last member in the compound, which is here called the head noun of the compound, is declinable.

FORMATION: The members of a nominal compound are verb stems, adjectives, and nouns (derived nouns such as the adjectival nouns, participial nouns, or verbal nouns, and non-derived nouns).⁴ The only restriction is that the last item in the compound must be a noun (non-derived or derived), and it is the head noun of the compound.

In classical Tamil, the length of a nominal compound, that is, the number of members constituting a compound, seems to be indefinite. The longest undeclined nominal compound that is found in the anthologies has ten members: **mān taḷir mēni neṭu men paṇai t tōḷ kurun toṭi makalir** ‘mango shoot (like) complexioned women with tender, bamboo-like long and soft arms and small bangles’ (*pari.8:38*).⁵ Despite the indefiniteness in length, the structural variation of this type of compound depends on the number of members in that compound. Given that any one of the two types of nouns, namely non-derived nouns and derived nouns, can be the

āṇru avintu aṭaṅkiya ceyir ūr cemmāl

‘O flawless Noble One, (who is) content, contained, and humble.’

(*pati.37:5*)

[**āṇru** advp < **āṇ** ‘be content’; **avintu** advp < **avi** ‘be contained’;

aṭaṅkiya adjp < **aṭaṅku** ‘be humble’; **ceyir** ‘flaw’; **ūr** ‘to be over, to end’;

chemmāl head noun < **chemmal** which is declined for the vocative case.]

⁴ Verb stems which do not look like adjectives can function like “adjectives” or “modifiers.” See “Adjectives or Noun Modifiers” for the relation between a verb stem and an “adjective.”

Although, technically speaking, all nouns are derived forms (= root + formative suffix), a structural distinction may be drawn between adjectival/participial/verbal nouns and other types of nouns. For example, **collal** ‘speaking’ *vs.* **kal** ‘rock, stone.’ The verbal noun **collal** ‘speaking’ has a stem **col** ‘speak’ and an identifiable verbal noun suffix **al**, whereas in the substantive noun **kal** ‘rock/stone’, the formative suffix is not clear.

⁵ By an “undeclined compound” is meant a compound made of stems only, and the head noun is not marked for grammatical case.

last member of a compound, the formula for predicting the number of structural patterns that compounds can have is $2(4^{n-1})$, where “n” is the number of members constituting the compound.

For example, if a compound has two members, it can have any one of the following eight patterns:

- (i) non-derived noun — non-derived noun: **kaḷi p pū** (aka.40:1)
‘flower in the backwaters’
- (ii) adjective — non-derived noun: **vāṇ picir** (pati.11:1)
‘white spray of waterdrops’
- (iii) derived noun — non-derived noun: **peyal maḷai** (kuru.174:1)
‘pouring rain’
- (iv) verb stem — non-derived noun: **mī kai** (pati.40:12)
‘raised hand(s)’
- (v) non-derived noun — derived noun: **kai piṇi** (aka.32:12)
‘holding of the hands’
- (vi) adjective — derived noun: **tīn toṭai** (pati.66:1)
‘pleasant composition’
- (vii) derived noun — derived noun: **paricilar veṟukkai** (pati.15:21)
‘treasure of the suppliants’
- (viii) verb stem — derived noun: **viri cuṭar** ‘spreading rays’ (pari.19:100)

The formula $2(4^{n-1})$ in this case, where $n = 2$, yields 8.⁶

⁶ There are 32 [i.e., $2(4^{3-1}) = 32$] theoretically possible structural patterns of a three-member compound, 128 [i.e., $2(4^{4-1}) = 128$] patterns of a four-member compound, 512 patterns of a five-member compound, and so on. A few other examples:

adj.—non-derived noun—derived noun:

arum kaḷ noṭaimai ‘exchange for precious toddy’ (pati.68:11)

Semantic Interpretation of a Compound

The syntactic and semantic relations between the various members of a compound cannot easily be determined by grammatical rules. Syntactically, it can be said that the members tend to, but do not necessarily, qualify the closest nominal to their right. For example, in the seven-member compound **pacai kol mel viral perum tōḷ pulaitti** 'the washer woman with broad shoulders and soft fingers that scrub the starch (on clothes)' (*aka.34:11*), the first three members **pacai** 'starch', **kol** 'to scrub', and **mel** 'soft' modify the closest noun to their right, **viral** 'fingers.' The fifth member **perum** 'large, broad' modifies the noun closest to it on the right, **tōḷ** 'shoulders/arms.' The fourth and the sixth members, **viral** and **tōḷ**, together modify the last noun on the right, **pulaitti** 'washer woman', which is the head noun. On the other hand, in the compound **i-p-panṇu-il-tāy** (*puṛa.336:12*) 'this mother without (good) qualities' the first member **i** 'this' does not modify the noun **panṇu** '(good) qualities', which is immediately to its right. The first three members, **i**, **panṇu**, and **il** 'without, to be absent', modify the head noun **tāy** 'mother'; the meaning of the total structure is 'this mother without (good) qualities.'⁷ Another example: **parēr eṇṇuḷ muḷavu t tōḷ** 'big, handsome, strong, drum-like shoulders/arms' (*pati.31:20*). All the members, **parēr** 'big and beautiful', **eṇṇuḷ** 'strength', and **muḷavu** 'drum', precede and modify the head noun **tōḷ** 'shoulders/arms.' Although the third member **muḷavu** is a noun, the preceding members do not modify it.

adj.—verb stem—non-derived noun—adj.—non-derived noun—derived noun:

av-vāṅku untī am col pāṇmakal

(*aka.126:9*)

'the female bard with beautifully curved navel and pleasant words'

⁷ The **p** following the first member **i** is the result of joining **i** with the following item **panṇu**, which begins with **p**. The third member **il** is a verb stem which means 'to be non-existent.'

For an accurate semantic interpretation of the compound one has to depend on literary conventions or contexts. For example, **pēy makaḷ** ‘demon-woman’ (*pati.22:37*) is a compound in which the first member (**pēy** ‘ghost, demon’) refers to the group (of demons) to which the second member (**makaḷ** ‘woman’) belongs. But, in the compound **vaḷai makaḷ** ‘woman with bangles’ (*pati.23:23*) which is formally similar to **pēy makaḷ**, the first member (**vaḷai** ‘bangle, bracelet’) refers to what the second member (**makaḷ** ‘woman’) is wearing. In yet another compound **vaḷai talai** ‘head which is bending down’ (*pati.13:6*) which is similar to **vaḷai makaḷ**, the first member **vaḷai** does not mean ‘bangle’ or ‘bracelet’, but ‘bend down.’

ADJECTIVAL NOUNS OR APPELLATIVE NOUNS

GENERAL: Nominal stems (i.e., adjectival stems, verbal noun stems, participial noun stems, substantive noun stems, and oblique stems) take a PNG and the nouns thus formed are here called 'adjectival nouns.'¹ They signify a "complete" quality or "totality" of the state of their respective nouns. There is no particular time indicated by an adjectival noun.

An adjectival noun can be translated as 'X has Y' or 'X with the quality Y', where X is denoted by the PNG suffix and Y is the nominal stem serving as the base for the adjectival noun. If the nominal stem

¹ The same process has been described elsewhere as the "conjugation" of nouns (substantives) and adjectives, and the resulting forms of the conjugation are termed "pronominalized nouns," "personal nouns," and "personal adjectives" (Zvelebil 1967:15). One scholar refers to them as "appellative verbs" (Arunachalam:329). Also see "A Note on Stems" in "Morphophonemics."

underlying the adjectival noun refers to a location, place, or geographical direction, the adjectival noun is understood as ‘X belongs to Y’ or ‘X is in Y.’

The negative sense of an adjectival noun is normally expressed by the negative modifier of the nominal from which the adjectival noun is derived. Very rarely, *ā(t)* is appended to the stem and is subsequently followed by a PNG to produce a negative adjectival noun. Examples are given below.

Adjectival nouns, which function like any other nouns, can be declined. However, they are differentiated from verbal nouns and participial nouns in this study because the latter two are taken to be derived from verb roots. See “Verbal Nouns” and “Participial Nouns.”

FORMATION: Adjectival nouns are derived by suffixation. A PNG is added to a nominal stem. The affix *i*, *ā(t)*, or a glide (*ñ*, *n*, *y*, or *v*) is inserted between the stem and the PNG wherever necessary.² The affixes *āi*, *an*, or *in* intervene between the stem and the PNG in some cases.³ See “Person-Number-Gender” for the PNG categories.

² This *i* and the past/completive marker *i* could be related historically, or it could just be an enunciative vowel. See Zvelebil (1967:24), who considers this *i* in adjectival nouns as a derivational suffix.

³ The affix *āi* has the meaning ‘person’, and the affixes *an* and *in* could be related to the oblique markers *an* and *in*. Some might consider them as “empty morphs” (cf. Zvelebil 1967:32). Naccīṇārkkīṇiyar’s interpretation of certain forms where *an* is used is insightful. For example, this commentator takes the form *ceyvāna* (*kali.83:19*) to mean ‘like ... which are done.’ This treatment of *ceyvāna* (*ceyv* non-past/non-completive stem + *an* + *a* PNG) leads one to consider *an* as giving the sense ‘like.’ Another example where Naccīṇārkkīṇiyar interprets *an* similarly is *koḷvanai* ‘up until (I) get hold of (him)’ (“koḷlum aḷavum” *kali.147:33*). See “Notes on Miscellaneous Items” for more on *an* and *in*.

PNG for adjectival/appellative nouns

1st person singular: **eṇ, ēṇ**

1st person plural, honorific: **am, ām, ēm**

2nd person singular: **avai, āy, ai, ōy**

2nd person plural, honorific: **avir, ir, īr**

3rd person masculine singular: **avan, an, ān, ōn**

3rd person feminine singular: **aval, al, āl, i, ōl**

3rd person human plural, honorific: **ar, avar, ār, ōr**

3rd person neuter singular: **aḥtu, atu, atai, (t)tu**

3rd person neuter plural: **a, avai**

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: nominal stem + PNG

PNG Structure and Example

a: (3rd person neuter plural)

(non-oblique stem + a)

uru **kāla** kāṇ

(*pari.20:9-10*)

[**uru** ‘excessive, abundant’; **kāl** ‘wind’]

‘forest **with** much **wind**’

‘forest where the wind is gusty’

(non-oblique stem + glide + a)

kaṇṇiṇum **katava** niṇ mulaiyē

(*aiṇk.361:4*)

[**kata** ‘firm’]

‘Your breasts **are firmer** than your eyes.’

varuṭai māṇ **kuḷaviya** vaḷa malai (kali.43:14)

[**kuḷavi** ‘young one’]

‘fertile mountain(s) **with the young ones** of the varuṭai-deer’

eṇava kēṇmati (aka.379:5)

[**eṇa** ‘mine’ < **eṇ** ‘my’ + **a** case marker;

eṇava < **eṇa** + glide **v** + **a**]

‘Listen to **my** thoughts.’

(oblique stem + **a**)

niḷal tēyntu ulaṛiya **maratta** ... kāṭu (aka.1:11, 19)

[**maratt** oblique of **maram** ‘tree(s)’]

‘The forests **have** dried up **trees** with skimpy shade.’

nacciṇār īpavai ... **nummavē** (pari.20:85)

[**num** oblique of **nīr** or **nīyir** ‘you’; plural of ***nun** ‘your’ singular]

‘What(ever) the people who like you give, **are yours**.’

(non-oblique stem + **an** + **a**)

villōṇ **kālana** kaḷalē (kuru.7:1)

[**kāl** ‘leg(s), foot, feet’]

‘The warrior’s anklets are **on** the bowman’s **ankles**.’

(adjectival stem + **i** + glide + **a**)

iniya ceytu (kali.53:12)

[**in** ‘sweet, pleasant’]

‘having done **nice things**’

(oblique stem + **i** + glide + **a**)

maṭai māṇ ceppil **tamiya** vaikiya peyyā p pū (kuru.9:2-3)

[**tam** oblique of **tām** 'self']

'unworn flowers which stay **by themselves** in a jar with elegant rim'

'unworn flowers which stay alone in a jar with elegant rim'

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **a**)

paṇai **eruttina** ... pala pakaṭu (pura.387:7, 11)

[**eruttu** 'back of the neck, nape']

'many bulls **which have a broad nape**'

(adjectival stem + **āt** + **an** + **a**)

peruma nī emakku **innātana** pala ceyyiṇum niṇ iṇru amaital vallām (kuru.309:6-8)

[**in** 'sweet, pleasant'; **innātana** < **in** + **āt** + **an** + **a**]⁴

'Lord, even if you do many **unpleasant things** to us (hon.) we cannot be at peace without you.'

(Note that it is a negative noun.)

⁴ It is possible to construe **innātana** as a negative participial noun rather than as an adjectival noun, because the affix **āt** signifying negation is not very commonly added to an adjectival stem. Like **perutta** 'large' and similar "adjectives," **innātana** also supports the view that "adjectives" in classical Tamil manifest verbal quality.

[**tol** 'distant, old, ancient'; **aḥtē** < **aḥtu** + **ē**]⁵

'Our youth has passed and is very **distant/ancient** (now).'

atu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(non-oblique stem + **atu**)

yāṇatu pacalai

(*narr.50:7*)

[**yāṇ** 'beauty']

'The lovesick pallor is **beautiful**.'

(non-oblique stem + glide + **atu**)

maṭavatu amma maṇi niṛa eḷili

(*narr.316:1*)

[**maṭa** 'gullible, simple, stupid']

'The gem-colored cloud is certainly **gullible**.'

(non-oblique stem + **iṇ** + **atu**)

kūr ukir māṇṭa **kuḷampinatu** ... kutirai

(*kali.96:25-26*)

[**kuḷampu** 'hoof']

'The horse **has hooves** with sharp fully grown claws.'

atai: (3rd person neuter singular)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **atai**)

kaiyatai ... toṭi

(*kali.85:6-7*)

[**kai** 'arm, hand']

'The bangles are **on** (your) **hands**.'

'You have bangles on your hands.'

⁵ Actually, **aḥtu** is a variant of **atu** '(that) it.' The extra letter **ḥ** here makes the word **aḥtu** function as a metrical foot (**cīr**) in the line in which it occurs, which would be impossible if it is just **atu**. Commentators would refer to it as an **eḷuttu-p-pēru aḷapeṭai** or **virittai vikāram**.

am: (1st person plural/honorific)

(non-oblique stem + **am**)

yāmē ... irutalai p puḷḷiṇ ṓr **uyiram**mē (aka.12:4-5)

[**uyir** 'life breath']

'Like a bird with two heads, **we have** one **life-breath** (and two bodies).'

palam eṇṇu ikaḷtal ṓmpumiṇ

(puṛa.301:11)

[**pala** 'many']

'Stop despising (him) thinking "**We are many** (and he is one)."'

ar: (3rd person plural/honorific)

(non-oblique stem + **ar**)

vāl narai k **kūntalar** nanṇar nalattar toṇ mutu peṇṭir (matu:408-409)

[**kūntal** 'tresses']

'very old women **with** goodness, loveliness, and long grey **hair**'

'very old good and lovely women with long grey hair'

ciṛāar

(aka.107:17)

[**ciṛu** 'small, little']

'children'

(oblique stem + **ar**)

vāl narai k kūntalar nanṇar **nalattar** toṇ mutu peṇṭir (matu:408-409)

[**nalatt** oblique of **nalam** 'loveliness']

'very old women with goodness, **loveliness**, and long grey hair'

'very old good and **lovely** women with long grey hair'

moḷi peyar **tēettar** (kuru.11:7)
 [tēett oblique of tēem ‘country’]
 ‘He is **in a country** where the language is different.’

(non-oblique stem + glide + ar)⁶

valaiñar kuṭi (peru:274)
 [valai ‘net’]
 ‘the neighborhood of **the people with fishing nets**’

vaṇ kai viṇainar (pati.62:16)
 [viṇai ‘task, job, action’]
 ‘strong handed **people with a task**’
 ‘people with strong hands, engaged in a task’

nakaivar ‘allies’; pakaivar ‘enemies’ (pura.398:9)
 [nakai ‘friendliness, smile’; pakai ‘enmity, hostility’]

(non-oblique stem + i + glide + ar)

nōṇpiyar (narr.22:6)
 [nōṇpu ‘penance’]
 ‘**those who do penance**’

maṇi tikaḷ nutaliyar (pari.10:77)
 [nutal ‘forehead’]
 ‘**women with foreheads** on which gems glitter’

(verbal noun stem + glide + ar)

aruppam ... aḷinta maṇa k **kōṭṭaiyar** (pari.10:57)
 [kōṭu ‘to bend, be crooked’;

⁶ Cf. 1.3 in “Morphophonemics.”

kōṭṭaiyar < **kōṭṭai** ‘crookedness’ + glide **y** + **ar**

< **kōṭu** + **ai** verbal noun suffix + glide **y** + **ar**]

‘**people with stray mind** that has lost its strength’

(Here **kōṭṭai** is treated as a noun derived from the verb **kōṭu** and is taken to mean ‘crookedness.’ Normally, **kōṭṭai** is interpreted to mean ‘fortress.’)

(oblique stem + **āḷ** + **ar**)

cākāṭṭāḷar kampalai

(*pati.27:14*)

[**cākāṭṭ(u)** oblique of **cākāṭu** ‘cart, carriage’]

‘the noise of **people with carts**’

(non-oblique stem + **iṇ** + **ar**)

kuḷai k **kāṭiṇar**

(*kali.103:8*)

[**kāṭu** ‘ear lobe’]⁷

‘women **with** rings on their **lobes**’

(oblique stem + **iṇ** + **ar**)

kōṭu cuṭu **nūrrīṇar**

(*matu:401*)

[**nūrr(u)** oblique of **nūru** ‘powder, dust, powdered lime’]

‘**people who** bake oyster shells and (therefore) **have** (powdered lime) **dust** (on them)’

⁷ Both **kāṭu** and **cevi** mean ‘ear’ in modern Tamil. However, one literary context (*pari.11:97*), where both terms are used, suggests that **kāṭu** refers to the outer ear, specifically to the lobe, while **cevi** refers to the inner ear. Other literary contexts (earlier and later) confirm these identifications.

avar: (3rd person plural/honorific)

(non-oblique stem + **avar**)

illavar

(*aka.34:16*)

[il 'house']

'those who are in the house'

'those who stay in the house'

(verbal noun stem + **in** + **avar**)

poyyāṭal āṭum **puṇarppinavar**

(*pari.11:89*)

[**puṇarppu** 'union, uniting' < **puṇar** 'to join']

'women who play **with** a pretense of **uniting**'

avaḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(adjectival stem + **avaḷ**)

nallavaḷ

(*pari.12:92*)

[**nal** 'good']

'good woman'

(Some might derive **nallavaḷ** from **nalla** + **aḷ**. But see the next example which would not yield such segmentation.)

(oblique stem + **avaḷ**)

niṇ maruṅku cāru koḷ tuṛakkattavaḷ

(*pari.19:5-6*)

[**tuṛakkatt** oblique of **tuṛakkam** 'liberation, heaven']

'the woman from heaven who sits beside you in celebration'

avan: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-oblique stem + **avan**)

viṛalavan putalvan tāy

(*kuru.359:5-6*)

[**viṛal** ‘triumph’]

‘mother of the son of **the triumphant man**’

avir: (2nd person honorific/plural)

(non-oblique stem + **avir**)

viṇavaṇmiṇ **ūravir**

(*kali.147:53*)

[**ūr** ‘town’]

‘**People of the town**, do not ask me.’

avai:

(2nd person singular)

(non-oblique stem + **avai**)

āṇiru **tōlavai**

(*pari.21:67*)

[**tōl** ‘shoulders/arms’]

‘**You have twelve arms.**’

(non-oblique stem + glide + **avai**)

valampuri vaya **nēmiyavai**

(*pari.15:59*)

[**nēmi** ‘discus’]

‘**You have a right-spiralled conch and a victorious discus.**’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **avai**)

vaya **ampinavai**

(*pari.15:60*)

[**ampu** ‘arrow’]

‘**You have victorious arrows.**’

(3rd person neuter plural)

(non-oblique stem + **avai**)

kālavai ... ceyvuṛu kiṇkiṇi

(*kali.85:1, 2*)

[**kāl** ‘leg, foot’]

‘Well made jingle bells are **on** (your) **ankles**.’

aḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(adjectival noun stem + glide + **aḷ**)

āṇā c **cīrumaiyaḷ**

(*kuṛi*:26)

[**cīrumai** ‘lowliness, humility’ < **cīru** ‘small’ + **mai**]

‘she, with **endless humility**’

(oblique stem + **aḷ**)

naṇṇutal nītta **tilakattaḷ**

(*kali*.143:3)

[**tilakatt** oblique of **tilakam**, a decorative mark on a woman’s forehead, between the eyebrows or a little higher]

‘**the woman with a tilakam** that has left her forehead’⁸

‘the woman **without a tilakam** on her forehead’

(Note the intricacy involved in this formation. In this context, there is no **tilakam** on the woman’s forehead, because it has gone from her forehead. The adjectival noun **tilakattaḷ** is built on the entire phrase **naṇṇutal nītta tilakam** ‘the tilakam which has left [her] forehead.’)

(oblique stem + **in** + **aḷ**)

tiruttā c **cumaṭṭinaḷ**

(*kali*.109:13)

[**cumaṭṭ(u)** oblique of **cumaṭu**, a pad for carrying pots on one’s head]

‘woman with a **head pad** that is not arranged properly’

⁸ A similar example: **ceṇru cēkkallā p puḷḷa ... kuḷam** (*aka*.42:8) which literally means ‘the ponds have **birds which do not go and stay over**.’ However, it signifies that the ponds are dry and therefore the birds do not go and stay there.

an: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **an**)

enṛum ira varal **mālaiyan** (kuri:238-239)

[**mālai** ‘nature, characteristic, habit’]

‘**He has the habit** of coming (for a rendezvous) every night.’

kolaivan yār kolō ... **vilaivan** pōlāṇ (pura.152:8, 9)

[**kolai** ‘killing’; **vilai** ‘loot’]

‘Who is he, **the killer**? He looks like **someone with loot**.’

(non-oblique stem + **in**/glide + **an**)

kaccinan **kaḷalinan** ceccai k **kaṇṇiyan** (tiru:208)

[**kaccu** ‘wrap-around clothing’, **kaḷal** ‘warrior’s anklet’,

kaṇṇi ‘head-garland’]

‘**He has a garb, warrior’s anklets, and a head-garland** of ceccai leaves.’

(verbal noun stem + **an**)

talai nāl aṇṇa **pēṇalan** (narr.332:8)

[**pēṇal** ‘cherishing’]

< **pēṇ** ‘to cherish, foster, appreciate’]⁹

‘**He has the nature of appreciating** (me) as on the first day (of our meeting).’

⁹ Adjectival nouns like this, where a verbal noun ending with **al** provides the stem, are identical in structure to certain negative personal verbs (e.g., **pēṇalan** ‘he will not cherish’). The context determines the meaning.

(verbal noun stem + **ā** + **an**)

nannarālan

(*narr.100:12*)

[**nannar** ‘good quality’]

‘good man’

ātu¹⁰: (3rd person neuter singular)

(non-oblique stem + **atu**)

urantai k **kuṇātu**

(*aka.4:14*)

[**kuṇa** east’]

‘that which is in the east of Uṛantai’

ām: (1st person plural/honorific)

(oblique stem + glide + **ām**)

iruvām itaiyē

(*kuṛu.237:4*)

[**iru** ‘two’; **iruvām** ‘we two’]

‘between the two of us’

āy: (2nd person singular)

(non-oblique stem + **āy**)

kātalāy

(*pari.18:11*)

[**kātal** ‘love, affection’]

‘My love!’

¹⁰ It is a variant of **atu**. In this example, **ātu** is a result of joining **atu** ‘that it’ to **kuṇa**: cf. 3.2 in “Morphophonemics.”

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **āy**)

tēṇ nāṇu **katuppināy**

(*kali.40:9*)

[**katuppu** ‘hair, tresses’]

‘**You, with** sweet smelling **tresses.**’

ār: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(non-oblique stem + **ār**)

nuṭaṅku noci **nucuppār**

(*pari.9:49*)

[**nucuppu** ‘waist’]

‘**women with** swaying slender **waists**’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **ār**)

maruppu aṅcum **neñcinār**

(*kali.103:69*)

[**neñcu** ‘heart’]

‘**those with a heart** afraid of the horns (of the bull)’

āl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-oblique stem + **āl**)

āṭu akal **alkulāl**

(*kali.52:16*)

[**alkul** ‘pelvic area, hip’]

‘**the woman with** a swinging wide **hip**’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **āl**)

cōrntu vīḷ **katuppināl**

(*kali.52:12*)

[**katuppu** ‘hair, tresses’]

‘**the woman with** loose **hair** that is let down’

āṇ: (3rd person masculine singular)

(adjectival stem + **āṇ**)

perumāṇ parattaimai (kali.82:21)
 [peru(m) ‘great’]¹¹
 ‘the Great One’s (Lord’s) love for other women’

(non-oblique stem + **āṇ**)

tuṛaivaṇ tam ūrāṇē (kuru.97:3)
 [ūr ‘town’]
 ‘The Tuṛaivaṇ is in his (home)town.’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **āṇ**)

iraṅkum muraciṇāṇ (pari.21:38)
 [muracu ‘royal drum’]
 ‘the man with the royal drum which sounds in a low tone’

i: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **i**)

iraṇṭu aṛi kaḷvi nam kātalōḷē (kuru.312:1)
 [kaḷ ‘secrecy, shrewdness, deception’]¹²
 ‘My lady-love is a deceiver, knowing two (ways of behavior).’

¹¹ Some might consider deriving **perumāṇ** from **perumai** + **āṇ**. This study prefers to derive it from **peru** + **m** + **āṇ**. Cf. 5.3 in “Morphophonemics.”

¹² Cf. 7.1 in Morphophonemics. It is possible to consider **kaḷ** as a verb meaning ‘to deceive’ in which case **kaḷvi** could be construed as a participial noun: **kaḷ** + **v** non-past marker + **i** PNG.

ciṟu vaṇ **kaṇṇi**

(aka.385:17)

[**kaṇ** 'eye(s)']

'little **woman with cool determination / hard-heartedness**'

ir: (2nd person honorific/plural)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **ir**)

kiḷavir pōla

(malai:166)

[**kiḷa** 'claim; right']

'like **those who have a right**'

(oblique stem + **ir**)

pulaṇ uṭai **māntir**

(kali.22:4)

'**O people** who have wisdom.'¹³

(verbal noun stem + **ir**)

eṇṇai nakutirō **nalla nakāalir** maṇ kolō yāṇurra allal uṟṟiyāṇ māya

malar mārpu pulli p puṇara p perin (kali.142:15-18)

[**naku** 'to laugh'; **nakāal** 'laughing']¹⁴

'Are you all laughing at me? **Will you have a good laugh**, I wonder, if I get to embrace his illusive wide chest and unite with him who made me experience the grief (of lovesickness) I have (now)?'

¹³ Stem: **maṇ** 'to be established; to be everlasting', as in **maṇitar** 'human beings.' The suggested derivation is **māntir** (2nd person) < **māntar** (3rd person) < **maṇitar** (**maṇ** + **i** + **t** + **ar**) by deleting **i** and lengthening the root vowel **a** in compensation. See also Zvelebil (1967:30). The *Madras Tamil Lexicon* derives **maṇitan** 'man' from the Sanskrit **manu-ja** (V.3136). It gives no derivation for **māntar** (V.3159).

¹⁴ One modern commentator, P.V. Somasundaranar, takes **nakāalir** as a negative optative.

īr¹⁵: (2nd person honorific/plural)

(non-oblique stem + **īr**)

ūrīr pōla c curattiṭai iruntaṇir (pura.141:4)

[**ūr** ‘hometown, locality’]

‘You are in the forest as if **you are in your hometown.**’

en: (1st person singular)

(non-oblique stem + **en**)

niṇ ulli vanta ... **paricilen** (pura.211:6-7)

[**paricil** ‘reward, gift’]

‘**I am a suppliant** who came thinking of you.’

(Note that **paricilen** can be understood as ‘I who need a gift.’)

ēm: (1st person plural/honorific)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **ēm**)

vēntaṇ **pācaraiyēmē** (aka.24:18)

[**pācarai** ‘war camp’]

‘**We are in the king’s war camp.**’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **ēm**)

pala nāṭu **neñciṇēm** (kali.35:19)

[**neñcu** ‘heart’]

‘**we have a heart** which seeks many things’

¹⁵ It is a variant of **ir**.

ēn: (1st person singular)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **ēn**)

poḷutu maṟuttu uṇṇum **uṇṭiyēn** (*pura.399:17*)

[**uṇṭi** ‘food, edible items, meal’]

‘**I have** (the habit of) eating **a meal** denying (it) at times.’

‘I eat infrequently.’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **ēn**)

neṇcu aṟaipōkiya **aṟivinērkē** (*aka.26:26*)

[**aṟivu** ‘knowledge, wisdom’]

‘for **me with a wisdom** that has gone low’

ai: (2nd person singular)

(non-oblique stem + **ai**)

nīyum **tāyai** ivaṟku (*aka.16:13*)

[**tāy** ‘mother’]

‘**You also are a mother** to him.’

tavirtta **tērai** viḷartta **kaṇṇai** (*pura.353:5*)

[**tēr** ‘chariot’; **kaṇ** ‘eyes’]

‘**You have a chariot** which you have abandoned. **You have pale eyes.**’

(oblique stem + **ai**)

uraṇ **uṭai uḷḷattai** (*kali.12:10*)

[**uḷḷatt** oblique of **uḷḷam** ‘heart, mind’]

‘**You have a heart** which has strength.’

(non-oblique stem + **āḷ** + **an** + **ai**)

nī emakku yārai_yum allai **notumalāḷanai** (narr.395:1-2)
 [notumal 'strangeness, unknown-ness']
 'You are no one to us. **You are a stranger.**'

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **ai**)

āṇā maintinai (kali.96:2)
 [maintu 'strength']
 '**You have endless strength.**'

ōy: (2nd person singular)

(non-oblique stem + **ōy**)

tuṛaivaṇai nī in_{it}u muyaṅkumati **kātalōyē** (aink.148:2-3)
 [kātal 'love']
 'O you with love (for him), embrace the man from the shore well.'

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **ōy**)

tuḷāy mēval **mārpinoḃy** (pari.13:60)
 [mārpū 'chest']
 'You, who have a chest which the tuḷāy leaves have joined.'
 'O you who are wearing a garland of **tuḷāy.**'

ōr: (3rd person plural/honorific)

(non-oblique stem + **ōr**)

ivaṇōr (kuru.395:4)
 [ivaṇ 'this place, here']
 'people who belong to this place'

nam **kātalōr**

(*kali.36:11*)

[**kātal** ‘love, affection’]

‘our (hon.) lover’

(oblique stem + **ōr**)

iru **nilattōrum**

(*pari.19:4*)

[**nilatt** oblique of **nilam** ‘land, world’]

‘people of both worlds’

(adjectival stem + **ōr**)

nallōr yārkol

(*kuṛu.7:2*)

[**nal** ‘good’]

‘Who are (these) good people?’

(adjectival stem + glide + **ōr**)

putuvōr p puṇartal veyyaṇ

(*kali.75:10*)

[**putu** ‘new’]

‘He likes to unite with new people.’

ōl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **ōl**)

maṇaiyōl

(*aka.14:14*)

[**maṇai** ‘household, home’]

‘woman of the house’

ōn: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-oblique stem + glide + **ōn**)

malai **kiḷavōn**

(*kali.40:34*)

[**kiḷa** ‘claim’]

‘he who has a claim for the mountain’

(oblique stem + **ōn**)

tammōn koṭumai

(*narr.88:6*)

[**tam** oblique of **tām** ‘he’, honorific]

‘his cruelty’

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **ōn**)

cīṛaru **munpinōn**

(*kali.101:8*)

[**munpu** ‘physical strength’]

‘the man who has the strength difficult to be disapproved of by hissing’

(t)tu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(adjectival noun stem + **ttu**)

putuvōrttu ... iv aḷuṅkal ūrē

(*kuṛu.385:7*)

[**putuvōr** ‘unknown people’ < **putu** ‘new, unknown’]

‘This noisy town has new people.’

(non-oblique stem + **tu**)¹⁶

kavalai **mākkaṭṭu** i-p-pētai ūrē

(*kuṛu.159:7*)

[**mākkaḷ** ‘people’]

‘This innocent town has people who care.’

¹⁶ Some might consider the suffix to be **ttu** in these cases.

mallar̥ru ... im malai keḷu ver̥pu (*narr.93:4*)

[**mallal** 'bounty']

'This valley surrounded by mountains **is bountiful**.'

(adjectival stem + **ā(t)** + **tu**)

naṇi **innātu** (*kurū.245:2*)

[**in** 'sweet, pleasant']

'it would be very **unpleasant**'

(Note that it is a negative noun.)

(adjectival stem + **i** + **tu**)

vālitu (*kali.105:18*)

[**vāl** 'white']

'the **white one**'

kāntaḷ nāl̥tōrum **putitu** īṇa (*kali.53:5*)

[**putu** 'fresh, new']

'Everyday, the kāntaḷ bushes put out **flowers that are fresh**, and ...'

(non-oblique stem + **in** + **tu**)

puṛavē ... **veṇkurumpinru** (*puṛa.386:12, 13*)

[**veṇkurumpu** 'small, cruel, dangerous habitats']

'the uncultivated land **has difficult habitats**'

piṇai ... kāṭṭu iralaiyoṭu vatiyum **puraviṛru** amma ... **ūrē** (*narr.121:3-5*)

[**puravu** 'uncultivated area, forest, jungle']

'**The town has uncultivated areas** where the doe stays around with its mate in the jungle.'

SECTION 3

STEM CLASSIFICATION ON A PHONOLOGICAL BASIS

GENERAL: See “A Note on Stems” in “Morphophonemics.” Nominal stems do not undergo complicated grammatical processes and therefore a classification scheme for them is not essential. Western missionaries who wrote grammars of Tamil classified Tamil nouns into several groups for the sake of declining them, but such classification does not seem necessary for the purposes of this study. Verbs reflect a great deal of variation, and it is hoped that a classification of the verb stems on the basis of the different suffixes they take in classical Tamil will provide a helpful conceptual framework for the reader.¹ This study is not intended to teach the reader how to generate classical Tamil verbs. An analysis of classical

¹ Modern scholars classify Tamil verbs either as weak and strong groups, or into several classes. For example, Andronov classifies Tamil verbs into weak and strong on the basis of the type of the verbal noun suffix added to the verb stem:

“The basic form of the Tamil verb, i.e. the form used to name an action (e.g., in dictionaries) is that of the verbal noun in - (த)தல் -(t)tal ...; e.g., செய்தல் ‘doing, to do’, அறிதல் ‘knowing, to know’, ... படித்தல் ‘reading, to read’

Tamil verbs into various classes is, in fact, not necessary here. However, for the sake of describing the stem forms found in classical Tamil poems and for understanding that different conjugated forms could signify a single grammatical notion (e.g., **koḷi** and **koṇṭu** — adverbial participle of **koḷ** 'to take hold'), the possible types of verb stems are discussed below.

The forms that most lend themselves to a classifying scheme are the adverbial participles of classical Tamil verbs. The infinitive forms provide some help, other non-past verb forms none at all. The infinitive is also a non-past form. Even so, it seems futile to classify the verb stems on the basis of their non-past forms. Therefore, the classification of verb stems is given in the following paragraphs on the basis of their attested adverbial participles in classical Tamil. This classification might seem unusual. However, it seems the best way to provide a conceptual framework for classical Tamil verb stems which behave morphophonemically alike.

"Verbs, taking the suffix தல் **-tal** are weak verbs; e.g., செய்தல் 'doing, to do'; Verbs, taking the suffix த்தல் **-ttal** are strong verbs; e.g., படித்தல் 'reading, to read'..." (Andronov 1969:127).

Hart and Hart (1979:41) consider that it is convenient "to speak of seven classes of Tamil verbs." Their classification, which follows that of Graul, is as follows:

- 1a. **cey** 'to do'
- 1b. **koḷ** 'to take'
- 1c. **vel** 'to conquer'
- 2. **uṭkār** 'to sit down'
- 3. **vāṇku** 'to buy'
- 4. **cāppiṭu** 'to eat'
- 5a. **uṇ** 'to eat'
- 5b. **tūṇ** 'to eat'
- 5c. **kēḷ** 'to ask, hear'
- 5d. **vīḷ** 'to sell'
- 6. **pār** 'to see'
- 7. **naṭa** 'to walk'
- Irregular: **vā** 'to come'; **pō** 'to go'

Stem-types Discerned from the Adverbial Participles

Classical Tamil adverbial participles end with **i**, **y**, or **u**, which are added to the past stem of the verb.² If the markers **i**, **y**, and **u** are removed from the adverbial participle form, one is left with what can be construed as the “past stem.” On the basis of the shapes of such past stems and how they behave morphophonemically, the following two groups are obtained: the stem-types discerned from the adverbial participles ending with **i** or **y** and the stem-types discerned from the adverbial participles ending with **u**.

Stem-types Discerned from the Adverbial Participles Ending with **i** or **y**:

Adverbial participles ending with **i** or **y** are not attested for every verb, but are associated with all types of verbs in this period. Their past stem is the same as their adverbial participle form, so the **i** and **y** in these forms are here called the past/completive marker.

Type (i): Stems which end with a consonant. They take the past/completive marker **i**. Examples:

uṇ ‘to eat, enjoy, consume’, **pēṇ** ‘to care for’, **muraṇ** ‘to oppose’, **paḷun** ‘to ripen’, **tar** ‘to bring (about), trigger’, **var** ‘to come (about), emerge’, **vār** ‘to comb, split, straighten’, **etir** ‘to respond, react’, **āl** ‘to make noise, rejoice’, **col** ‘to reveal’, **vel** ‘to conquer’, **iyaḷ** ‘to move gently’, **tev** ‘to snatch’, **āl** ‘to rule over’, **koḷ** ‘to take hold, draw toward self, receive, accept, grasp, grab, hook’, **potuḷ** ‘to

² See “The Past Stem” for information on the past stem and “The Adverbial Participle” for the rationale behind keeping the past stem and the adverbial participle separate, although they are not different in some instances.

crowd', **kūn** 'to bend', **man** 'to be established, be everlasting', **kavin** 'to adorn, be abundant.'

Type (ii): Stems which end with a vowel. Here, the disyllabic stems ending with **u** are open and contain short vowels. Stems ending with a long vowel except **ī** and **ai** take the past/completive marker **y**. Stems ending with **ī** or **ai** take the past/completive marker **i**. Among the stems ending with a short vowel, those with stem-final **a** take the past/completive marker **i** or **y**, while the others take the past/completive marker **i**. Examples:

tula 'to stir, scoop', **vinā** 'to enquire', **kā** 'to lift by hanging', **tā** 'to spread', **kuvi** 'to pile up', **ceṛi** 'to be dense/close', **muṭi** 'to tie up', **cī** 'to whittle, gather as a pile', **iṭu** 'to let out, express, drop, put down', **iru** 'to sit down, remain', **uru** 'to experience, attain', **poru** 'to stand up to, match', **miku** 'to abound', **vaku** 'to divide', **vaḷu** 'to slip', **veru** 'to shy from, shun', **tū** 'to spread', **ē** 'to command', **tai** 'to adorn, decorate', **ninai** 'to think', **pō** 'to go', **vau** 'to grab.'

Type (iii): Stems which are non-monosyllabic and end with **u**. Here, the disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. These stems take the past/completive marker **i**. Examples:

nalku 'to provide', **añcu** 'to fear', **kaṭṭu** 'to bind', **vāṭu** 'to wilt, wither', **eḷutu** 'to write, paint', **tappu** 'to err; to wrong', **vimmu** 'to sob', **murru** 'to mature, come to a close', **iraiñcu** 'to bow, stoop', **viḷaiyāṭu** 'to play with peers.'

Stem-types Discerned from the Adverbial Participles Ending with **u**:

These stems are not different from the ones discussed above. Except for the stems referred to under Type (iii), all the other stem-types can derive

their adverbial participles in another way by taking the consonantal-type of past/completive marker ***T** (**t**, **tt**, or **nt**) followed by the adverbial participle suffix **u**.³ Hence the following classification, based on the past/completive marker they take and their morphophonemic behavior.⁴

Type (a): Stems ending with a consonant. Monosyllabic stems which end with **y** but contain a long vowel and those which end with **r** or **l** take the past/completive marker **nt**. Other monosyllabic stems take the past/completive marker (**t**)**t**. Disyllabic stems ending with **y**, **r**, or **l** take the past/completive marker **nt**. Other disyllabic stems take the past/completive marker **t**. Examples:

kāṇ 'to realize, see', **pūṇ** 'to put on, wear', **uṇ** 'eat, enjoy', **muraṇ** 'to oppose', **āy** 'to select', **māy** 'to lose luster, fade, wear out', **pey** 'to pour', **koy** 'to pick', **ār** 'to be full', **etir** 'to respond', **al** 'not to be __', **il** 'to be non-existent', **kal** 'to learn, mature by experience', **kāl** 'to spurt', **cel** 'to leave (for a destination)', **nil** 'to stand up, be stable', **tāl** 'to lie low', **taval** 'to spread, diffuse', **iruḷ** 'to darken', **mūḷ** 'to emerge', **koḷ** 'to draw toward self, take hold, receive, accept, grasp, grab, hook', **nīḷ** 'to extend', **vēḷ** 'to make a wish', **āṇ** 'to be content with', **īṇ** 'to give birth, release', **kaviṇ** 'to adorn, be abundant.'

Type (b): Stems which end with a vowel. Here, the disyllabic stems ending with **u** are open and contain short vowels. Monosyllabic stems take the past/completive marker **tt** if they have an object,

³ The ***T** posited here can be considered as a convenient notation for the consonantal past-tense/completive aspect morpheme.

⁴ See "The Past Stem" for the morphophonemic combinations of these stems with their respective past/completive markers.

and the marker **nt** if they do not have an object. Disyllabic stems ending with **i** and containing a closed syllable and/or a long vowel take the past/completive marker **tt**. Among other disyllabic stems, those which do not end with **u** take the past/completive marker **nt**. Those stems ending with **ai** take the past/completive marker **nt** and very rarely **tt**; those ending with **u** can be said to take the past marker **nt** or can be considered as going through stem mutation for making their past/completive stem. Examples:

naṭa 'to happen, walk', **vaṛa** 'to become dry', **kā** 'to guard, protect', **yā** 'to bind, put together', **teri** 'to surface, know', **cinti** 'to ponder, remember', **nīṭṭi** 'to delay', **ī** 'to bestow', **cī** 'to whittle, gather as a pile', **vī** 'to fall apart', **iṭu** 'to let out, express, drop, put down', **ulu** 'to plough', **toḷu** 'to worship, bow', **naku** 'to smile, chuckle', **puku** 'to enter', **poru** 'to stand up to, match', **pū** 'to spread (like red blossoms)', **miku** 'to abound, be stirred up', **ce** 'to turn red', **ve** 'to steam up, boil', **kalai** 'be disarrayed', **ninai** 'to ponder, think', **o** 'to be like, resemble', **no** 'to suffer internally', **kō** 'to hang with a string', **pō** 'to go.'

Type (c/iii): Stems which are non-monosyllabic and end with **u**. Here, the disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. These stems take the past/completive marker **i**. Examples:

nalku 'to provide', **añcu** 'to fear', **kaṭṭu** 'to bind', **vāṭu** 'to wilt, wither', **eḷutu** 'to write, paint', **tappu** 'to err; to wrong', **vimmu** 'to sob', **murru** 'to mature, come to a close', **iraiñcu** 'to bow, stoop', **viḷaiyāṭu** 'to play with peers.'

THE COMPOUND VERB STEM

GENERAL: The stem which results from the combination of two independently meaningful stems, nominal or verbal, is here called a "compound stem." The stem which serves as the base for another stem is the "basic/primary stem"; the stem which is added to the primary stem is the "secondary/sub stem." "Stem₁ and Stem₂" or "the first stem and the second stem" might be a better way to refer to these stems. The term "secondary" or "auxiliary," in particular, seems to be a misnomer so far as classical Tamil is concerned, because this stem (i.e., the second) never seems to lose its individual semantic significance in the poems. On the contrary, it 'enlivens/verbalizes' the first stem when the latter is a nominal.¹

¹ If any, the problem might arise due to the difference between the original significance of these items in classical Tamil and their usage in modern Tamil. For example, the verb *vai* is understood in modern Tamil to mean 'to put, place' based on its various forms. In classical Tamil, it occurs in forms which ultimately yield its basic meaning as 'to stay.'

Only when the marker **tt** is added to the root/stem **vai**, it attains the signification ‘put, place.’ In any case, **vai** ‘to put’ is considered as an “auxiliary” verb in modern Tamil when it occurs after an adverbial participle form. It is discussed as a “non-attitudinal” auxiliary verb, because of its apparent inability to express semantic concepts such as aspect, mood, voice, causation, or attitude when it occurs after an adverbial participle (cf. Lehmann:205, 225, 227).

If the “auxiliary” usage of **vai** in modern Tamil is used as a key to understand the usage of **vai** in similar structural contexts in classical Tamil, one might not be able to appreciate its original significance in classical Tamil. For example, consider **kaṇ akan cilampil paṭuttu vaittanna pārai maruṅkil eṭuttu niṟuttanna iṭṭarum ciṟu neṟi** (*malai:14-16*): ‘very small narrow path (**iṭṭarum ciṟu neṟi**) that looks as if it was raised from the ground and made to stand up (**eṭuttu niṟuttanna**) near (**maruṅkil**) the rock which looks as if it was caused to fall down and made to stay there (**paṭuttu vaittanna**) on the spacious mountain (**kaṇ akan cilampil**).’ Here, the verb **vai** follows the adverbial participle form **paṭuttu** < **paṭu** ‘to fall.’ Similarly, the verb **niṟu** follows the adverbial participle form **eṭuttu** < **eṭu** ‘to take up.’ One may be tempted to consider **vai** as an auxiliary verb in **paṭuttu vaittanna** because of the interpretation of **vai** in similar structural contexts in modern Tamil. However, one would soon realize that the interpretation of **vai** as a “non-attitudinal” auxiliary verb in modern Tamil would not help one in understanding the significance of **vai** in the classical Tamil form **paṭuttu vaittanna**. Another issue one may face is the structural similarity between **paṭuttu vaittanna** and **eṭuttu niṟuttanna**, because in both cases, a verb (**vai**, **niṟu**) follows an adverbial participle (**paṭuttu**, **eṭuttu**).

Perhaps one must look in the old traditional commentaries for the origins of the real “auxiliary” usage of Tamil verbs. The narrative style of the commentators might be very helpful in understanding the difference between classical Tamil and later Tamil. For example, one could see the true “auxiliary” usage of **vai** in Parimēlaḷakar’s commentary on *pari.3:72*. Parimēlaḷakar interprets **piṟavā p piṟappu ilai piṟappittōr ilaiyē** (*pari.3:72*) as “**piṟavāp piṟappu uṭaiyai allai; aṇṇaṇam piṟantu vaittum piṟappittōrai uṭaiyai allai**.” Here, the *paripāṭal* line under consideration is part of an invocation to the deity Māyōṇ (Vishnu), and basically means ‘You have been born. Yet, there is no one who gave birth to you.’ Alluding to the fact that there is no one who caused the deity to be born, the commentator says, “**aṇṇaṇam piṟantu vaittum**” which means ‘even though you were born in that manner.’ Here, the form **piṟantu vaittum** contains the verb **vai** occurring after an adverbial participle (**piṟantu** < **piṟa** ‘to be born’). Since it does not have an object, **vaittu** ‘putting?, placing?’ here does not seem to function as a “main” verb. Consequently, one is inclined to give it an “auxiliary”

Therefore, the “compound verb stem” is taken in this study as an item composed of two classical Tamil stems: the first and the second. In this compound stem, the second is always a verb while the first can be nominal or verbal.

Some classical Tamil verbs have lost their basic significance over the centuries or have lost their function as primary stems: e.g., *iṭu* ‘to let out, express, lay down, drop, put down’, *ī* ‘to part with, give, provide, be compassionate’, and *koḷ* ‘to take hold, draw toward self, receive, accept, grasp, grab, hook.’ With the exception of *ī*, which has become obsolete, these and certain other verbs (*iru* ‘to remain, sit’, *viṭu* ‘to let go, let loose, release’) are construed as “auxiliary” verbs in modern Tamil when they serve as the second stem to the adverbial participle of a first stem. This chapter is about compound verb stems in classical Tamil.

FORMATION: The compound verb stems in classical Tamil are obtained by adding a verb stem to a nominal or a verbal. When the first stem is a nominal, the added second stem provides the significance of a verb to the first. When both are verbs, the first one provides the force of a verbal noun, when necessary. The second stem always retains its individual grammatical status as a verb.

Technically, it seems, any verb can “verbalize” the first stem if the latter is not already a verb. The most commonly used second stems which “verbalize” the first stem in classical Tamil are: *ā(r)* ‘to be full’, *uṇ* ‘to experience, enjoy, take in, consume’, *uru* ‘to experience, attain, feel’, *kil* ‘to be able, be possible’, *kūr* ‘be abundant’, *koḷ* ‘to take hold, have

status. In fact, the form *piṛantum* ‘although (you have been) born’, without *vai*, would convey the same meaning as *piṛantu vaittum*. What *vai* seems to add in this context is a sense of conceding that is normally conveyed by “nevertheless” in English.

For different discussions of “auxiliary” verbs in modern Tamil, see *Auxiliaries in Dravidian* (1980) edited by Agesthialingom and Srinivasa Varma.

control of, put on, carry, draw toward self, accept, receive, grasp, grab, hook', **cira** 'to excel, surpass', **cey** 'to make, do, perform', **taku** 'to be fit for, be ready, proper', **tar(u)** 'to bring (about)', **paṭu** 'to feel, experience, befall', **peru** 'to experience, obtain', and **var(u)** 'to come (about), be actualized, emerge, be visible, happen.'

The compound verb stem is conjugated like other verb stems. Affixes are added to the second member of the compound stem while the first member remains unchanged.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: nominal/verbal stem + verb stem

Second Stem Structure and Example

ār 'to be full'

(nominal first stem + **ār**)

cemmal nāḷavai **aṇṇāntu** pukutal (*pura.54:3*)
 [**aṇṇāntu** < **aṇ(ṇu)** 'lifting, elevation' + **ā(r)ntu** 'being filled']
 'entering the Noble One's royal court with (our) **head held high**'

(nominal first stem + **ār**)

ataṇ etir collēm ātaliṇ **allāntu** kalaṅki (*kuri:142-143*)
 [**allāntu** < **al** 'darkness, nothingness' + **ā(r)ntu**]
 '(He was) agitated, **being full of oblivion**, since we did not reply (to his query) ...'

(nominal first stem + **ār**)

maṇam kavalpu iṇṇi **mālāntu** eḷuntu (*poru:95*)
 [**mālāntu** < **māl** 'sober, fascination, temperate' + **ā(r)ntu**]
 'waking up, **being temperate**, without confusion in mind'

iṭu ‘to let out, express, lay down, put down, drop’²

(nominal first stem + **iṭu**)

iralai ... **melkiṭu** kavuḷa (aka.34:4, 8)
 [melkiṭu < melku ‘cud’ + iṭu ‘to let out, drop’]³
 ‘deer whose mouths **let out the cud**’
 ‘deer whose mouths **drop the cud**’

(nominal first stem + **iṭu**)

ikal iṭum paṇi (kali.134:12)
 [ikaliṭu < ikal ‘hostility’ + iṭu ‘to express’]
 ‘winter **which expresses hostility**’

(nominal first stem + **iṭu**)

eṇṇai ... muṇkai paṇṇi naliya t **terumantiṭṭu** aṇṇāy ivan oruvaṇ
 ceytatu kāṇ eṇṇēṇ (kali.51:9-11)
 [terumantiṭṭu < terumantu ‘bewilderment’ + iṭu ‘to let out, express’;
 terumantu < *terumar ‘bewildered’]
 ‘As he grabbed and squeezed my hand, I **let out my bewilderment**
 and cried “Mother look what he did.”’

(verbal first stem + **iṭu**); The first stem retains its significance
 as a verb.

polam paṭaiya mā **mayāṅkiṭa** (pura.359:14)

² The semantic range of classical Tamil **iṭu** is shared by **pōṭu** and **vai** in modern Tamil.

³ Some might derive **melkiṭu** from **melki** advp of **mel** ‘to chew’ + **iṭu**. But the adverbial participle form of **mel** is **menru**. So, if the form under question was **menriṭa** (instead of **melkiṭa**), one can derive it from **menru** + **iṭa**. I have taken **melku** as the verbal noun derived from **mel** ‘to chew’ + **ku** verbal noun suffix.

[mayaṅkiṭa

< past/completive stem **mayaṅki** + **iṭa** infinitive of **iṭu** ‘to drop’;

mayaṅki past/completive stem < **mayaṅku** ‘to crowd up’]

‘as the horses with golden ornaments **crowded up and dropped** (those ornaments)’

(verbal first stem + **iṭu**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

tuṇi naṇi **kanriṭin** kāmam keṭūum

(*pari.6:97-98*)

[**kanriṭu** < past/completive stem **kanri**

(< **kanru** ‘to ripen’) + **iṭu** ‘to let out, express’]

‘Passion will be destroyed, **if** sulking ripens well and **lets it out.**’

‘Passion will be destroyed, **if** sulking **ripens** well and **is let out.**’

(verbal first stem + **iṭu**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

eṇi tiṇai **tantiṭa** iḷinta mīṇ

(*kali.121:20*)

[**tantiṭu** < past/completive stem **tant**

(< **tar** ‘to bring’) + **iṭu** ‘to put down, drop.’]

‘the fish which came down (the shore) as the tossing waves **brought** and **put them down**’

iru ‘continue to be, remain in an undisturbed state, stay, wait’⁴

(verbal first stem + **iru**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

tiru **vīrrirunta** tūtu tīr niyamattu

(*tiru:70*)

[**vīrriru** < past/completive stem **vīrr** + **iru** ‘to stay’;

⁴ There are contexts where **iru** means ‘to sit down’, especially when it follows a nominal: e.g., vēṅkai **irunta** tōkai ‘the peacock **which was sitting** on the vēṅkai tree’ (*aink. 294:1*).

vīrr < **vīru** ‘to be grand, spread, puff up’]⁵

‘flawless street (full of shops) where Prosperity **reigns in grandeur**’

(verbal first stem + **iru**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

māyinaṁ ... **iraikoṇṭiruntanna** nallārai k kaṇṭēṇ (kali.92:17, 19)

[**iraikoṇṭiru** ‘continue to camp’

< past/completive stem **iraikoṇṭ** + **iru** ‘to remain, sit’;

iraikoṇṭ < **irai** ‘stay’ + **koṇṭ** past/completive stem

(< **koḷ** ‘to take on, have’)]

‘I saw lovely women who were like a group of peacocks **sitting around** (flocking).’

(verbal first stem + **iru**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

vāṇ ūr matiyam varai cēriṇ avvarai tēṇiṇ irāl eṇa ēṇi **ilaittirukkum**
kāṇ akal nāṭaṇ (kali.39:8-10)

[**ilaittiru** < past/completive stem **ilaitt**

(< **ilai** ‘to fabricate, build’) + **iru** ‘to wait’]

‘the man from the wide forest country where the people **build a ladder and wait for the moon** thinking that it is a beehive, when it passes over the mountain (through the clouds)’

ī ‘to part with, provide, give, be compassionate’⁶

It is the most difficult of all the verbs to know the original significance of. It is always added to the first stem which is in its past/completive

⁵ The stem **vīrr** can be considered as a mutated stem.

⁶ Cf. tuyil īyātu ‘without providing sleep’ (pati.12:7).

form or to the first stem which is followed by the negative marker **āt**.

(verbal first stem + **ī**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

ayarntīkam vīruntē (kali.32:19)

[**ayar** 'to celebrate'; **ī** 'to give, provide'; **īk** non-past stem

ayarntīkam < **ayarnt** past/completive stem + **īk** + **am** PNG]

'Let us **celebrate and give** to the unknown (guests).'

(verbal first stem + **ī**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

īrantīvāy kēl īṇi (kali.59:9)

[**īra** 'to depart'; **ī** 'be compassionate'; **īv** non-past stem;

īrantīvāy < **īrant** past/completive stem + **īv** + **āy** PNG]

'O (woman) you are **being compassionate, going away** (from me). Listen now.'

(verbal first stem + **ī**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

yāṅku c ceṇṇu īṅku **vantīttantāy** (kali.96:4)

[**vantīttantāy** < **vant** past/completive stem

(< **var** 'to come') + **īttantāy**

īttantāy < **ī** 'be compassionate' + **tantāy** 'you brought about']

'Where did you go and (have) **returned here to be compassionate?**'

(Note that here the **ī** is followed by yet another secondary stem **tar** 'to bring about'.)

(verbal first stem + **ī**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

irul vāṇam kaṭal mukantu eṇ mēl uṛaiyoṭu **ninṛīyal** vēṇṭum
(kali.145:55-56)

[**ninṛīyal** < **ninṛ** past/completive stem

(< **niḷ** 'to stay, stand') + **īyal** 'giving, providing']

'O dark sky, you must fetch sea water and **stand** over me **and give** raindrops.'

(bare verb stem + **āt** + **ī**)

niṇ makaḷ ... pacalai kāma nōy eṇa c **ceppātimē** (aka.52:13, 14-15)

[**ceppu** 'to tell', reveal; **imē** imperative]

'**Please do not say**, "Your daughter's paleness is (due to her) sickness of passion." '

uṇ 'to experience, take in, enjoy, eat'

(verbal stem + **uṇ**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

aṇṇāṇ col **nampuṇṭal** yārkkum iṇku aritu (kali.47:10)

[**nampuṇ** < **nampu** 'belief' + **uṇ** 'to experience, take']

'It is difficult for anyone to **take** his words **in** (good) **faith**.'

uru 'to experience, attain, feel'

(nominal first stem + **uru**)

tātu uṇ paṛavai **pētural** aṇci maṇi nā ārtta māṇ viṇai t tēraṇ
(aka.4:11-12)

[**pēturu** < **pētu** 'bewilderment' + **uru** 'to experience, feel']

'the man on the chariot who tied up the bells fearing that the honey bees would **feel bewilderment**'

(nominal first stem + **uru**)

tāṇ **varutturī** nam vayiṇ aṛiyātu ayaṁta aṇṇai (narr.273:3-4)

[**varutturu** < **varuttu** verbal noun

(< **varuntu** ‘to suffer, grieve’) + **uru** ‘to experience’]

‘mother who **experienced grief** and had the frenzied dance (for the deity Murukan) performed without knowing us’

(verbal first stem + **uru**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

eḥkurru iru vēru ākiya ... vaṇappu (aka.29:5, 6)

[**eḥkuru** < **eḥku** ‘to pull, comb (cotton)’ + **uru** ‘to feel’]

‘beauty which became twofold **having felt the pull**’

kil ‘to be able, be possible’⁷

(verbal first stem + **kil**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

nīṇaippatu oṇṇu **aṛikilē** varuntuval (kali.47:17)

[**aṛikil** < **aṛi** ‘to know’ + **kil** ‘to be able’]

‘I suffer **without being able** to know what she thinks.’

(verbal first stem + (**k**)**kil**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

nāṇaṇum nīyūm vatuvaīyul paṇṭu aṛiyātīr pōl **paṭarkirpīr** maṇ kolō
paṇṭu aṛiyātīr pōl paṭarntīr paḷam kēṇmai kaṇṭaṛiyātēṇ pōl
karakkirpenmaṇ kolō (kali.39:37-40)

[**paṭarkir** < **paṭar** ‘to move around, spread’ + **kil** ‘to be able’;

karakkir < **kara** ‘to conceal, hide’ + (**k**)**kil** ‘to be able’]

⁷ It could be a source of the modern present tense marker.

‘At your wedding will the Nāṭaṇ and you **be able to behave / conduct yourselves** as if you did not know each other in the past? **Will I be able to conceal** it as if I did not know about the previous friendship between you who behaved as though you did not know each other before?’

(verbal first stem + **kil**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

eṇ tōḷi aru maḷai taral vēṇṭiṇ **tarukirkum** perumaiyaḷē (*kali.39:5-6*)

[**tarukir** < **tar** ‘to bring’ + **kil** ‘to be able’]

‘If you ask (her) to bring down the rain, my friend has the greatness that is **capable of bringing** down the rain.’

(verbal first stem + **kil**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

tamiyarē **tuṇikirral** peṇṭirkkum aritu (*kali.47:13*)

[**tuṇkirr** < **tuṇi** ‘to determine, dare’ + **kil** ‘to be able’]

‘It is difficult for women too to **be able to determine** by themselves.’

koḷ ‘to take hold, take on, have control of, put on, carry, draw toward self, accept, receive, grasp, grab, hook’⁸

⁸ In many contexts, **koḷ** is used in classical Tamil indicating the action of picking/hooking something or carrying something or putting something on oneself. Cf. kuppai-k-kīrai ... iḷam taḷir **koytu koṇṭu** ‘picking the tender leaves of spinach and **carrying** it’ (*puṛa.159:9-10*); vēḷattu veṇ **kōṭu koṇṭu** ‘taking out and **carrying the tusks** of the elephant’ (*pati.30:11*); pēṭi **peṇ koṇṭu** āṭu kai ‘the (hairy) hands of the eunuch who has put on (the appearance of) a female’ or ‘the dancing of the eunuch who has put on (the appearance of) a female’ (*aka.206:2*). Also compare modern Tamil words **kokki** and **koṇṭi** which basically refer to a “hook.”

(verbal first stem + **koḷ**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

niṇ eruttiṇkaṇ **eṭuttukkoḷvatu** pōlum ... vaṭu (kali.71:15-16)
[**eṭuttukkoḷ** < advp **eṭuttu**

(< **eṭu** ‘to take out, raise’) + **koḷ** ‘to draw toward self’]

‘the scar which looks like it can be **taken** / **pulled out** of your nape’

(verbal first stem + **koḷ**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

umaṇar pakaṭu teḷi teḷ viḷi neṭum perum kuṇrattu **imiḷkoḷa** iyampum (aka.17:13-14)

[**imiḷkoḷ** < **imiḷ** ‘to roar, roaring’ + **koḷ** ‘to receive, attain’]

‘The clear call of the salt merchants, who drive their bullocks, sounds so as **to roar** at the big tall mountain.’

(verbal first stem + **koḷ**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

kōṭu ēntu oruttal āru **kaṭikoḷḷum** arum curam (aka.65:16-17)
[**kaṭikoḷ** < **kaṭi** ‘to guard, guarding’ + **koḷ** ‘to take hold’]

‘the difficult forest where the bull elephant with high tusks has **taken on the guarding** of the path’

In modern Tamil, the verb **koḷ** is usually considered as indicating an action done to or for the benefit of the doer, and therefore in modern analyses of Tamil, is referred to as a “middle” verb when it follows an adverbial participle. Note that **koḷ** added to an adverbial participle provides the sense ‘accept, have control of’ in modern Tamil too, even when not necessarily indicating an action done for the benefit of the doer. Compare talaivar kuṇṇavāliyai **mannittār** ‘The head (of the government) **pardoned** the criminal’ vs. (eṇṇai) **mannittu-k-koḷḷuṅkaḷ** ‘Please **forgive (and accept)** me.’ Similarly, aval kuḷantaiyai p **pārttukkoṇṭāḷ** ‘She **took care** of the baby.’

(verbal first stem + **koḷ**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

annai **kaṭikoṇṭaṇaḷē** tōḷi (aka.20:12-13)

[**kaṭikoḷ** < **kaṭi** ‘to guard, guarding’ + **koḷ** ‘to take hold, take on’]

‘Mother has **taken on the guarding** (of me), my friend.’

cira ‘to excel, surpass’

(verbal first stem + **cira**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

veṇṇiyoṭu **maḷiciraṇtu** pōr val ilaiyar tāḷ valam vāḷtta (aka.74:1-2)

[**maḷicira** < **maḷi** ‘to rejoice’ + **cira** ‘to excel’]

‘as the young men skilled in warfare **excelled in joy** because of their victory and praised the success of (the king’s) effort’

cey ‘to make, do, perform’

(nominal first stem + **cey**)

kātalceytu aruḷātu tuṇantār⁹ (kali.122:3)

[**kātalcey** < **kātal** ‘love’ + **cey** ‘to do, make’]

‘he who **showed love** and left without showing mercy’

taku ‘to be fit for, suit, be proper’

(nominal first stem + **taku**)

paintaḷai taii **aṇittaka** pal pūṇkāṇal alkiṇam varutal (aka.20:9-10)

[**aṇittaka** < **aṇi** ‘dress, garment’ + **taka**

(< **taku** ‘to be fit for, to suit’)]

⁹ Compare **kātalittu** (kali.96:18), where **kāтали** ‘to love’ is a verb.

‘wearing green leaves (for skirt) and staying around **accordingly** in groves with many flowers’

(verbal first stem + **taku**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

teritaku vaṇappiṇ (aka.29:6)

[**teritaku** < **teri** ‘be visible’ + **taku** ‘to be fit’]

‘with beauty **fit for being visible**’

(verbal first stem + **taku**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

iḷamaiyum kāmamum ōrāṅku p peṇṇār vaḷamai **viḷaitakkatu** uṇṭō (kali.18:7-8)

[**viḷaitakkatu** ‘that which is proper to be desired’

< **viḷai** ‘to desire’ + **takkatu** ‘that which is proper/appropriate’]

‘Is there anything **proper** in the riches **to be desired** by those people who have both youth and passion?’

‘Is there anything proper in the riches that is to be desired by people who are both young and passionate?’

(verbal first stem + **taku**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

vem curam taṇiyē iṇappa yāṇ oḷintu iruttal **nakutakkaṇru** ivvaḷuṅkal
ūrkke (kali.23:3-5)

[**nakutakkaṇru** < **naku** ‘to laugh’ + **takkaṇru** ‘is fit for’]

‘My staying here, being left behind all alone as he left through the forest, is (a matter) **fit for laughter** in this noisy town.’

tar(u) ‘to bring (about), trigger, emerge’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

ētilāṇ paṭai pōla **iruttantatu** ilavēṇil (kali.27:8)

[**iruttantatu** ‘it has brought a deep rooted stay’

< **iru** ‘to be set or rooted in’ + **tantatu** (< **tar** ‘to bring about’)]

‘Spring has brought about a stay like a stranger’s weapon.’

‘Spring has arrived like a stranger’s weapon (for those who are lonely).’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

eṇ makan vayiṇ **peyartantēṇē** (aka.26:20, 21)

[**peyartantēṇē** ‘I brought about a move’

< **peyar** ‘to move’ + **tantēṇē** (< **tar** ‘to bring about’)]

‘I moved toward my son.’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

kal eṇ cummaiyar ṇērēr eṇa p **pukutantu** (aka.86:18)

[**pukutantu** ‘bringing about an entrance’

< **puku** ‘to enter’ + **tantu** (< **tar** ‘to bring about’)]

‘those (women) making a roaring noise made a sudden entrance and ...’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

pular viṭiyaliṇ virumpi p **pōttantu** taḷaiyum tārum tantanaṇ ivan
(*narr.80:4-5*)

[**pōttantu** ‘bringing about an entrance’ < ***pō** + **tar(u)**

< ***puku** ‘to enter, entering’ + **tar** ‘to bring about’]

‘He **arrived** with joy in the early hours of dawn and gave me leaves (for my skirt) and a garland.’

(Note that **puku** ‘to enter’ has lost its intervocalic **k** and then the vowel **u** in its first syllable is lengthened to **ō** in compensation.)

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

avar namakku iṇ uyir **pōttarum** maruttuvar āyiṇ (*kali.137:24-25*)

[**pōttarum** ‘one who brings about an entrance’;

see previous example.]

‘if he is a physician **who would bring back** our (hon.) sweet life, ...’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

villan ... yātō maṛṛu am mā tīram paṭar eṇa viṇavi **nirrantōṇē**
(*aka.48:12, 13-14*)

[**nirrantōṇē** ‘he who brought about a standing’

< **nil** ‘to stand, standing’ + **tantōṇē** (< **tar** ‘to bring about’)]

‘The bow-man asked where that animal went and **stood (up there)**.’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

pallōr uvanta uvakai ellām eṇṇu! **peytantarre** (*aka.42:11-12*)

[**peytantarru** ‘it is/was like bringing about a pour’

< **pey** ‘to pour’ + **antarru** ‘it is like bringing’

antarru < **tant** past/completive stem of **tar** ‘to bring’ + **arru** ‘it is like’]

‘It was like **bringing a downpour** of the total joy of many people into my self.’

(verbal first stem + **tar**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

mēvār **viṭuttanta** kūntal kutirai

(*kali.103:53*)

[**viṭuttanta** ‘that which was let loose’

< **viṭu** ‘to let go’ + **tanta** adjp of **tar** ‘to bring about’]

‘the horse with tresses **which** the unfriendly people **let loose**’

paṭu ‘to feel, experience, suffer, befall’

(nominal first stem + **paṭu**)

ciṛantāṇai **valipaṭii** c ceṇṇaṇaḷ

(*kali.9:23*)

[**valipaṭu** < **vali** ‘path’ + **paṭu** ‘to befall, following in the path’]

‘She left (us) **following the path** of the eminent one (her lover).’

(verbal first stem + **paṭu**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

paṇai ... **atirpaṭṭu** muḷaṅki

(*pati.39:5, 6*)

[**atirpaṭṭu** ‘having felt the vibration’

< **atir** ‘to vibrate’ + **paṭu** ‘to feel’]

‘the drums **vibrated** and roared, and ...’

(verbal first stem + **paṭu**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

nāvoṭu navilā **nakai paṭu** tiñcol ... putalvan (aka.16:4, 5)

[**nakaipaṭu**

< **naku** 'to smile, chuckle, laughter' + **paṭu** 'to experience, suffer']
 'his son who speaks unpracticed sweet words which **suffer laughter**'
 'his son who speaks unpracticed sweet words which invites laughter'

peru 'to experience, obtain'

(nominal first stem + **peru**); The first stem is a verbal noun.

ālpavar kalakkuṛa **alaiperra** nāṭu (kali.5:12)

[**alaiperra** 'that which experienced shaking'

< **alai** 'shaking' + **peru** 'to experience']
 'the country **which was shaken** as its rulers experienced agitation'

var(u) 'to come (about), be actualized, emerge, be visible, happen'

(verbal first stem + **var**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

taṇ tamil āyvantilār (pari.9:25)

[āy 'to investigate, select';

āyvantilār < āy + vantilār 'those who have not come close'

vantilār < vant past/completive stem (< var 'to come')

+ il negative + ār PNG]

'those **who have not come close to an investigation** of pleasant Tamil'

'those who have not performed an investigation of pleasant Tamil'

(verbal first stem + **var**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

toṭi k kai **taivara** t tōyntaṇṇu kollō (aka.9:23)

[**taivara** ‘as it caressed’]

< **tai** ‘to join, weave as a wreath’ + **vara** infinitive of **var**]

‘Did it (my heart) immerse (in her) **as** her hand wearing bangles **came close** to caressing?’

‘Did it (my heart) immerse (in her) as she caressed it with her hand wearing bangles?’

(verbal first stem + **var**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

muyakkam avarum peṇkuvar maṇṇē **nayavara** (aka.11:10-11)

[**nayavara** < **naya** ‘to long for’ + **vara** infinitive of **var** ‘to emerge’]

‘He too would get (my) embrace **as / when** (our) **longing finds its expression.**’

(verbal first stem + **var**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

niṇ mel iyal **mēvanta** cīraṭi (kali.13:10-11)

[**mēvanta** < **mē** ‘to spread’ + **vanta** adjp of **var** ‘to emerge’]

‘your small feet **in which** your gentle quality **surfaces**’

(verbal first stem + **var**); The first stem has the force of a verbal noun.

maṇi **oḷirvarum** ara v uṇaḷ āram (pura.398:27)

[**oḷirvarum** < **oḷir** ‘to glitter, glittering’ + **varum** adjp of **var** ‘to emerge, surface’]

‘a snake-like necklace in which the **glittering** of the gems is **visible**’

viṭu ‘to let go, let loose, release, split’¹⁰

(verbal first stem + **viṭu**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

nin tōl mēl ām **īram āy viṭṭana** puṇ (kali.95:17-18)

[**āyviṭu** < advp **āy** (< **ā** ‘to be’) + **viṭu** ‘to split, release’;

īram ‘moisture’]

‘the wound (of sulking) split open as / **turned into moisture** that is on your shoulders/arms’

(verbal first stem + **viṭu**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

naṛunutal nalkāl kaṇ **māriṇiṭin** (kali.61:23-24)

[**māriṇiṭu** < advp **māri** (< **māru** ‘to change’) + **viṭu** ‘to let go’]

‘if the woman with good-smelling forehead **changes** her attitude **and lets** (me) **go** without showing kindness’

‘if the woman with good-smelling forehead does not show kindness, changes her attitude, and lets (me) go’

(verbal first stem + **viṭu**); The first stem retains its significance as a verb.

avaṇ taṇṇoṭu **ninruviṭu** (kali.63:16-17)

[**ninruviṭu** < advp **ninru** (< **nil** ‘to stay’) + **viṭu** ‘to let go’]

‘**stay** with him and **let** (other things) **go**’

¹⁰ Cf. vēntu **viṭṭanaṇē** ‘The king also **let us go**’ (*aink.483:2*); emmai ... vilakkiya ellā nī ... **viṭu** ‘O you who blocked my way, **let me go**.’ (*kali.116:3-4*).

THE CAUSATIVE STEM

GENERAL: The causative stem tells us that the action denoted by the verb root is “made to happen.” The person/thing who/which experiences the action denoted by the causative stem is different from the agent/doer of the action. This type of stem is conjugated like other verb stems.

It is impossible to have a neat dichotomy as with causative/transitive verbs vs. non-causative/intransitive verbs so far as classical Tamil is concerned. It is perhaps better to make a distinction between non-causative and transitive verbs, because non-causative verbs can be transitive or intransitive, while transitive verbs can be causative/effective or non-causative/affective.¹

FORMATION: The causative stem is derived in the following ways:

- (i) by using the bare verb stem;

¹ For issues on the causatives/transitives, see K. Paramasivam (1979) and Schiffman (IJDL, vol. V, No. 2:238-248).

- (ii) by stem mutation or mutation of the consonantal type of the past/completive marker that is added to the stem;²
- (iii) by suffixation: adding **tt**, **(p)pi**, or **vi** to the verb stem;
- (iv) by periphrasis: the verb **cey** 'to do', **paṇṇu** 'to make', or **vai** 'to stay, remain' follows the infinitive form ending with **a** of the verb to be "causativized."

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: using bare verb stem

vēntarai ... tākki muracamotu oruṅku **akappaṭṭēṇ** āyiṇ ... kuṭi paḷi
tūṛṛum kōlēṇ ākuka (puṛa.72:7-9, 12)

[**akappaṭu** 'to be caught' < **akam** 'inside' + **paṭu** 'to befall';

akappaṭēṇ 'I will not cause ___ to be caught'

< **akappaṭu** + **ēṇ** PNG.

When a PNG beginning with a long vowel is added to the stem, a negative finite verb is derived. It is conceivable that the elongation of the stem-initial vowel of the suffix here indicates causativity.]

'May I become a tyrant despised by my subjects if I do not attack (enemy) kings and **cause them to be caught** along with their royal drums!'

yaṇ avaṇ ... variṇē cuṭaroṭu tiritaru neruṅci pōla eṇṇoṭu **tiriyeṇ** āyiṇ
(aka.336:17-19)

[**tiri** 'to twist, whirl']

² See "Morphophonemics" for a discussion of stem mutation.

‘(When and) if he comes, if **I do not twist** him like the **neruñci** flower which turns around with the sun, ...’

kaḷiṟu avara kāppu uṭaiya kayam **paṭiyinai** (pura.15:9-10)

[**paṭi** ‘making __ immerse’

< **paṭu** ‘to lie down, fall’ + **i** (past/completive marker)]

‘You **made** (your) elephants **get down** into their guarded ponds.’

uppai **māri** venṇel tariiya uppu vilai kaḷani c cenṇaṇal³

(kuru.269:5-6)

[**māri** ‘exchanging, having exchanged’

< **māru** ‘to change’ + **i** (past/completive marker)]

‘She went to the field where salt is grown in order to (get and later) **exchange** (that) salt and bring white paddy.’

(Note that the object of **māri** is overtly marked with the case marker **ai**: **uppai** < **uppu** ‘salt’ + **ai**)

kaḷiṅkam ... **uṭi**⁴

(peru:469, 470)

[**uṭi** ‘making __ wear’ < **uṭu** ‘to wear’ + **i** (past/completive marker)]

‘**making me wear** fine clothing’

³ In modern Tamil, the causative/effecive form of **māri** is **mārri** or **māra vaittu**, so one would say uppai **mārri** ‘changing the salt.’

⁴ In this one and similar forms, the **i** has been identified as a “causative-producer.” For further information, see P.S. Subrahmanyam (1971:10).

Formation mechanism:

stem mutation or mutation of the past/completive marker

- (a) In consonant-final stems, the stem-final consonant is hardened if it is not **y**, **r**, or **v**. And the short vowel in the monosyllabic stem is lengthened⁵:

āṇā viruppiṇ tāṇ ... ūṭṭi (peru:479)

[ūṭṭ < uṇ ‘to eat, enjoy, consume’]

‘He **fed** us showing endless affection and ...’

taṇ māṛpu tuṇai āka t tuyiṛṛuka (aka:35:12, 13)

[tuyiṛṛ < tuyil ‘to sleep’]

‘May he **make** her **sleep** with his chest as support.’

cura mutal varuttam mara mutal vīṭṭi (aka:301:9)

[vīṭṭ ‘to fall, perish’]

‘destroying/**making** the grief caused by the forest **perish** at the tree’

‘making the distress due to walking in the forest disappear by resting under the tree’

⁵ These are stems from Type (i) discussed in “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis.” Those who may not want to consider the process described here as “stem mutation,” can say that the past/completive marker in these cases is **t** (e.g., **uṇ** + **t** > **uṇṭ**) and that the causative stems are obtained by simply hardening the past marker (e.g., **uṇṭ** > **ūṭṭ**).

In any case, these causative stems take the adverbial participle suffix **i** while their non-causative counterparts take the adverbial participle suffix **i** or **u** (e.g., **ūṭṭi** (peru:479) vs. **uṇṭi** (aink.268:2) or **uṇṭu** (poru:88)).

Note that the non-past/non-completive marker for the non-causative stems in this group is nothing, **k**, **t**, **n**, **p**, or **v**: e.g., **payilum** (aka.344:6); **uṇkum** (aka.133:11); **kāṇṭum** (pura.173:9); **uṇṇumar** (aka.2:2); **uṇṇar** (narr.355:7); **payilvuṛru** (peru:195). The non-past/non-completive marker for the causative stems is nothing, **k**, **t**, **n**, or **v**: e.g., **payiṛṛum** (peru:300); **ūṭṭutum** (pari.8:80); **ūṭṭuvāḷ** (pari.21:26).

kaṇal muṛai **mūṭṭi** (pari.2:63)
 [mūṭṭ < mū] ‘to emerge, start’]
 ‘starting the (sacrificial) fire in the conventional manner’

nel kavaḷam **tīṛri** (puṛa.337:14)
 [tīṛr < tin] ‘to eat, munch’]
 ‘making (the elephants) eat the morsel of rice’

- (b) Stems here are non-monosyllabic and end with **u**. The disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. The last consonant is hardened/doubled in stems with open syllables; and the closing consonant in the penultimate syllable is hardened in stems which have a closed syllable.⁶

kāṭu koṇṛu nāṭu **ākki** k kuḷam toṭṭu vaḷam **perukki** (paṭṭ:283-284)
 [ākk < āku ‘to become’ ; perukk < peruku ‘to multiply’]
 ‘tilling the forest and making it become an agricultural land; digging the ponds and causing the bounty to multiply’

naṭukal pīli **cūṭṭi** (aka.35:8)
 [cūṭṭ < cūṭu ‘to wear’]
 ‘making the hero-stone wear the peacock feather’
 ‘putting the peacock feather on the hero-stone’

⁶ These are stems referred to as Type (iii) discussed in “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis.” These stems, whether causative/effective or not, take the adverbial participle suffix **i** which is the same as their past/completive marker. Also note that their non-past/non-completive marker is nothing, **k**, **t**, **n**, **p**, or **v**: e.g., **cūṭṭum** (aka.156:1); **muyaṅkukam** (aka.47:19); **varuntutum** (naṛṇ.103:9); **cūṭunar** (naṛṇ.278:4); **vāṅkunaḷ** (kuṛu.229:2); **vākkunar** (pari.10:75); **varuntupa** (aka.216:16); **varuntuvar** (naṛṇ.41:5); **cūṭṭuvan** (puṛa.319:15).

ēru eṇru ēṛri (poru:167)

[ēṛr < ēru ‘to climb up’]

‘saying “Get on” and **making** (you) **climb** on the chariot’

aṭaṅkā maṇṇarai aṭakkum ... nāṭu kiḷavōyē (pura.200:16, 17)

[aṭakk < aṭaṅku ‘to be submissive, contained’]

‘O king of the country who **makes** stubborn kings **submit** to you.’

vēmpu mutal taṭintu muracu ceya muracci (pati.44:15-16)

[muracc < muraṅcu ‘to become lumpy’]

‘cutting down the base of (the enemy king’s) vēmpu tree and **lumping** it for making drums’

pēraṇar uṇviyai varuttāṭimē (narr.193:9)

[varutt < varuntu ‘to be distressed, grieve’]

‘Please **do not make** her **suffer** who is already in great distress.’

ciṟu tiṇai p paṭu pul ōppi el paṭa varutiyar (kuri:38-39)

[ōpp < ōmp(u) ‘to recede, retreat, shield oneself from’]

‘**Make** the birds which come down on the small millet plants **retreat** and you return (home) as the sun goes down.’

muṟuval tōṛri ... malar uṇkaṇ putaittu (narr.370:10, 11)

[tōṛr < tōṇru ‘to appear’]

‘**making** a smile **appear** (on her face) and concealing/covering (her) flower-like attractive eyes’

- (c) In certain vowel final stems and certain consonant-final stems, the past/completive marker **nt** is hardened to result in **tt** which provides the causative sense. These vowel-final stems are disyllabic and open

with short syllables. Consonant-final stems are monosyllabic or disyllabic but end with **y**, **r**, or **l**⁷:

maṭa p piṭi kaṇṭu vaya k kari māl urru **naṭatta** naṭavātu nirpa
(*pari.10.42-43*)

[**naṭatt** < **naṭa** ‘to walk’ + **tt**]

‘In spite of being **urged to walk**, the strong male elephant stood still, looking at a female elephant and feeling intoxicated, and ...’

mati nōkki alar **vītta** āmpal vāṇ malar (k*ali.72:6*)

[**vītt** < **vī** ‘to unfold, fall down’ + **tt**]

‘the big āmpal flower which looked at the moon and **opened down/unfolded** its petals’

cēma t tirai **vīlttu** (p*ari.10:34*)

[**vīltt** < **vīl** ‘to fall, roll down’ + **tt**]

‘**making** the curtain (around the bed) **come/roll down**’

⁷ These are selective stems from Type (i) and all the stems from Type (ii) discussed in “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis.” The stems from Type (i) end with **y**, **r**, or **l**. As it becomes known from here, the past/completive marker in this group of non-causative stems is **nt** and **tt** in causative stems.

The non-causative stems in this group invariably take the adverbial participle suffix **u** (e.g., **uyarntu**) as do most of their causative counterparts (e.g., **uyarrtu** ‘having raised’); some of these causative stems take the adverbial participle suffix **i** (e.g., **ārtti** ‘making ___ full/enjoy’; **cērtti** ‘making ___ join ___’) in this period.

Also note that the non-causative stems in this group have no overt non-past/non-completive marker or have **k**, **t**, **n**, **p**, or **v**: **uyarum** (*kali.129:1*); **taṇikuvaḷ** (*aka.22:6*); **kaluḷti** (*kali.91:12*); **ārna** (*pati.13:6*); **cārpavan** (*kali.104:25*); **ōyvana** (*kuṟu.383:4*). The causative stems take the non-past/non-completive marker **kk**, **tt**, or **pp**: e.g., **uyarkkuvai** (*matu.131*); **taṇikkum** (*kali.81:18*); **aṇitta** (*pari.18:49*); **iruttum** (*aka.377:8*); **taṇippa** (*kali.78:8*).

perravai piṛar piṛarkku ārtti (peru:174)
 [ārtt < ār ‘to be full’ + tt]
 ‘making others be filled with what he obtained’
 ‘making others enjoy what he obtained’

talai p puṇarttu acaitta paṇṛokai k kala p paiyar (aka.301:22)
 [puṇartt ‘to make __ join’ < puṇar ‘to join’ + tt]
 ‘people with bags of numerous instruments which they put on their
 heads and tied’

Formation mechanism: suffixation; stem + tt/(p)pi/vi

Marker Structure and Example

tt: Mostly, disyllabic stems which are open and end with **u** take this marker. The consonant preceding the stem-final **u** is invariably **k**, **ṭ**, **p**, or **r**.⁸

⁸ Rarely, monosyllabic stems like **vai** ‘to remain, stay’ and **koḷ** ‘to take, receive’ take this marker, and an enunciative **u** is added to the consonant-final stem preceding the causative marker: e.g., **vaittu** (aka.265:13); **koḷuttāmal** (pari.11:126); **akkuḷuttu?** (kali.94:20).

Note that the non-causative stems in this group make their past/completive stem by mutation and that their adverbial participle suffix is **u**: **puku** ‘to enter’ > **pukku** ‘having entered’; **paṭu** ‘to experience’ > **paṭṭu** ‘having experienced’; **uṛu** ‘to feel, attain’ > **uṛṛu** ‘having felt/attained.’ The causative marker **tt** serves as the past/completive marker or vice versa in causative stems. The adverbial participle suffix for the causative stems is **u**: e.g., **pukuttu** (kali.38:4). Note that this adverbial participle form changes in modern Tamil as **pukutti** ‘making ... enter.’

Also note that the non-past/non-completive marker for the non-causative stems here is nothing, **k**, **t**, **n**, **p**, or **v**: e.g., **pukum** (kuru.139:3); **paṭukam** (kali.64:9); **vaika** (kuru.285:1); **vaikum** (narr.47:5); **uṛutum** (aka.18:13); **pukuta** (pari.22:11); **paṭunar** (narr.240:8); **pukupa** (pura.177:4); **pukuvaḷ** (pura.293:5). The non-past/non-completive marker for the causative stems is nothing, **kk**, or **pp**: e.g., **vaiiya** (narr.12:6); **toṭiyya** (aka.394:11); **uṛukkum** (pati.76:4); **tapukkum** (pati.51:27); **paṭukkuvaḷ** (aka.60:15);

(stem + tt)

maṇṇuruttu t tuvara muṭitta tukaḷ aṟu mucchi (tiru.25-26)

[maṇṇurutt < maṇ(ṇu) ‘to wash’ + uru ‘to experience’ + tt]⁹‘dirtless hair which **was washed** and tied up as it dried’

(p)pi: Vowel-final stems here are open, disyllabic, and do not end with u.
In consonant-final stems, the final consonant is r, l, or ḷ among which, r and ḷ are preceded by a long vowel.¹⁰

(stem + ppi)

oṇṇutal pacappittōrē (aiṅk.67:5)

[pacappi ‘to cause lovesick pallor’

< paca ‘to have lovesick pallor’ + ppi]

‘those (women) whose bright foreheads you **caused to have** (lovesick) pallor’

neytal parappil pāvai kiṭappi niṇ kuṟi vantaṇṇ (kuru.114:1-2)

[kiṭappi ‘to lay’ < kiṭa ‘to lie still’ + ppi]

‘I came for a rendezvous with you after **laying** down my doll in the neytal bush’

viṭukkum (narr.35:6); vaikkum (puṛa.190:2); paṭuppavar (kali.9:12).

⁹ See “The Compound Verb Stem” for the use of uru as a second stem in such contexts.¹⁰ Non-causative stems here take the past/completive marker (n)t and the adverbial participle suffix u, while their causative counterparts take the past/completive marker tt or i and the adverbial participle suffix u or i.

Also note that nothing, (k)k, (t)t, n, (p)p, or v is the non-past/non-completive marker for the non-causative stems here: e.g., tālum (kali.67:17); kiṭakkum (kuru.343:6); kiṭatti (puṛa.72:5); taṇiti (puṛa.10:6); cērunar (puṛa.361:10); kiṭappa (kali.104:53); koṭpa (aiṅk.192:1); cērvār (pari.5:78). The causative stems take the non-past/non-completive marker (k)k or (p)p: e.g., uyarkkuvai (matu.131); viḷkkum (puṛa.104:3); tālppikkum (pari.6:75); cērppa (aka.80:3); ayaṛppiya (kali.120:12).

(The **i** in the causative suffix **ppi** and the past/completive marker **i** result in just one **i**: **kiṭappi** + **i** > **kiṭappi**.)

en ciṟuvaṇai k kāl kaḷi kaṭṭilil kiṭappi t tū veḷ aṟuvai **pōrppittilatē**
(*puṛa.286:3-5*)

[**pōr** ‘to cover oneself’; **pōrppi** ‘to cover __’]

‘Alas! It (the gratitude owed to his chief) did not lay my young boy on the stretcher (for corpses) and **cover** him with a pure white cloth.’

aruku pati āka ampiyil **tālppikkum** ... vaiyai (*pari.6:75, 77*)

[**tālppi** ‘to cause to delay’ < **tāl** ‘to delay, procrastinate’ + **ppi**]

‘Although our town is close (to your town), the river Vaiyai **causes you to delay** by means of the raft.’

(stem + **pi**)

vaḷai **koṭpittān** (*kali.145:57*)

[**koṭpi** < **koḷ** ‘to spin, whirl’ + **pi**]

‘He **made** (my) bangles **whirl**.’

‘He **made** my bangles become **loose**.’

‘He caused lovesickness in me.’

vi: Vowel-final stems here are open, disyllabic, and do not normally end with **a**. In consonant-final stems, the final consonant is **r**, **l**, or **ḷ** among which, **r** and **ḷ** are preceded by a long vowel. An enunciative **u** is added to the stem-final consonant when the stem is monosyllabic.¹¹

¹¹ Non-causative stems here take the past/completive marker (n)**t** or **i** and the adverbial participle suffix **u** or **i**, while their causative counterparts take the past/completive marker **tt** or **i** and the adverbial participle suffix **u** or **i**.

(stem + **vi**)

aṛivippēm kol aṛiviyēm kol eṇa iru pāl paṭṭa cūlcci (*aka.52:10-11*)

[**aṛivi** ‘to let know, inform’ < **aṛi** ‘to know’ + **vi**]

‘twofold deliberation wondering whether to **let** (my mother) **know** or **let not know** (about my love with a man)’

arukuvittu oruvarai akaṛṛaliṇ ... payaṇ iṇṇu ... kāmam

(*kali.142:2, 5*)

[**arukuvi** < **aruku** ‘to get close’ + **vi**]

‘Passion is not useful since it pushes away people **having caused them to get close.**’

aṛivar uṛuviya allal

(*aka.98:26*)

[**uṛuvi** ‘to cause to experience’ < **uṛu** ‘to experience’ + **vi**]

‘the agony **which** the wise man **caused** (me) **to experience**’

kātalaṇ nal ēṛ eḷil ākam cērvittal eññāṇṇum vallatāl vaiyai p puṇal

(*pari.12:73-75*)

[**cēṛ** ‘to join’; **cērvittal** ‘to make join’]

‘The Vaiyai water is always capable of **making** (the woman) **join** her lover’s lovely handsome chest.’

Also note that nothing, **k**, **t**, **n**, **p**, or **v** is the non-past/non-completive marker for these non-causative stems: e.g., **aṛiyum** (*aka.195:14*); **aṛikuvar** (*puṛa.61:15*); **cērkam** (*puṛa.255:6*); **aṛitum** (*kuṛu.40:3*); **aṛinai** (*puṛa.381:20*); **aṛipavar** (*kali.125:3*); **aṛival** (*aka.388:21*). The causative stems take the non-past/non-completive marker **kk**, **tt**, or **pp**: e.g., **uṛukkum** (*aka.216:4*); **uṛutta** (*aka.224:12*); **aṛivippēm** (*aka.52:10*).

maḱaḷir cuṭar talai k **koḷuvi** (*kurī*:224)
 [**koḷuvi** < **koḷ** ‘to take hold, receive’ + **u** enunciative + **vi**]¹²
 ‘women **made** (the lamp) **receive** the flame on its head’
 ‘women lit the lamps’

Formation mechanism: infinitive in **a** + **cey/paṇṇu/vai**

Structure and Example

cey ‘to do’

(infinitive + **cey**)

vāḷa c **ceyta** nalviṇai allatu āḷum kālai p puṇai piṇitu illai
(*puṛa*.367:10-11)

[**vāḷa** infinitive < **vāḷ** ‘to live, prosper, thrive’ + **a**]
 ‘At the time when one is lying low, there is no other raft (as life-support) except the good actions **which made one thrive.**’

paṇṇu ‘to make’

(infinitive + **paṇṇu**)

vēntarai ... **uṇaṅka** p **paṇṇi** (*puṛa*.25:5, 6)
 [**uṇaṅka** infinitive < **uṇaṅku** ‘to dry up, wither, lose life’ + **a**]
 ‘**making** the (enemy) kings **wither**’

¹² Some might derive **koḷuvi** from **koḷuvu** + **i**.

vai ‘to remain’,¹³

(infinitive + **vai**)

arum kalam tantu ... neṭu nakar **niṛaiya vaitta** niṇ munṇōr
(*pura.198:15-17*)

[**niṛaiya** infinitive < **niṛai** ‘to fill up’ + glide **y** + **a**]

‘your ancestors who brought precious jewelry and **made** their vast city **fill** with it’

¹³ Some may wonder about the meaning given here for **vai** ‘to remain’ because in modern Tamil, it is understood as ‘to put, place carefully.’ However, classical Tamil contexts like **vaikiya** ‘that which remained’ (*kuru.9:2*), as opposed to **vaitta** which is illustrated in the present example, suggest that the **tt** in **vaitta** brings a causative/effective sense. Nevertheless, many people may expect the form **vaiku** instead of **vai** to mean ‘to stay, remain’ in classical Tamil. I take the **ku** in **vaiku** to be a formative suffix.

THE PASSIVE STEM

GENERAL: The passive voice represents the subject as acted upon.¹ It gives a sense 'allow oneself to', 'get oneself verb(ed/en)', etc. The stem which expresses the "passive voice" is here called the "passive stem." The passive stem is conjugated like the compound verb stem.

FORMATION: The signification of the passive voice is expressed in a variety of ways. The passive stem is derived in the following ways:

¹ See *Greek Grammar*, Smyth (1972:394). Caldwell (1875, reprint 1976:465, 469) notes: "None of the Dravidian dialects possesses any passive particle or suffix, or any means of expressing passivity by direct inflectional change; the signification of the passive voice is, nevertheless, capable of being expressed in a variety of ways.

"The Dravidian languages, indeed, are destitute of passive properly so called, and therefore, resist every effort to bring *paḍ-u* into general use. Such efforts are constantly being made by foreigners, who are accustomed to passives in their own tongues, and fancy that they cannot get on without them; but nothing sounds more barbarous to the Dravidian ear than the unnecessary use of *paṭu* as a passive auxiliary. It is only when combined with nouns that its use is thoroughly allowable."

- (i) by using the verb stem;
- (ii) by suffixing one of the verb stems, **uṇ** 'to experience, obtain, enjoy, eat, consume', **uru** 'to experience, suffer', or **paṭu** 'to experience, suffer, befall' to nominal stems. These verbs are used as second stems in compound verb stems. See "The Compound Verb Stem" for information on the first stem and the second stem;
- (iii) by periphrasis: **paṭu** or **peru** 'to experience, obtain' is added to an infinitive ending with **(kk)a**.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: using bare verb stem

nallār uṇuppelām koṇṭu **iyarriyāl** (kali.56:7-8)
[iyarriyāl] 'she, who was created' < **iyarru** 'to create'²
 'she who was created with the limbs of all the lovely ones (women).'

nin veyyōl (puṛa.222:2; 391:18)
[vey] 'to like, desire'³
 'she, whom you like'

nī veyyōloṭu ... nerunal āṭiṇai puṇalē (aka.6:7, 11)
[vey] 'to like, desire'
 'You bathed in the river yesterday with her, whom you like.'

² In such participial nouns, the passive voice is expressed without being marked for passive. The context alone determines the actual meaning.

³ Compare **en veyyōl** 'she, who likes me' (puṛa.159:14).

añcuvatu añcā aṇṇili allāṇ (kali.42:26)

[**añcuvatu** ‘that which has to be feared’ < **añcu** ‘to fear’]

‘He is not a virtueless person who does not fear **what** ought/has to be feared.’

āyiram **vittiyatu** viḷaiya (matu:11)

[**vittiyatu** ‘what was sown’ < **vittu** ‘to sow’]

‘as **what** was sown grows in thousands’

vaṇai kāl **yāttatu** vayiṇ torum peṇukuvir (peru:133)

[**yāttatu** ‘that which was bound/tied’ < **yā** ‘to bind’]

‘At every place you will get the fried meat (of the animal) **which** was bound to a post (when being raised).’

ceypa ellām ceytaṇaṇ (pura.239:19)

[**ceypa** ‘those which are done’ < **cey** ‘to do’]

‘He did all **those** which were to be done.’

Formation mechanism— nominal stem + **uṇ/uru/paṭu**

Structure and Example

uṇ ‘to experience, obtain, enjoy, eat’

(nominal stem + **uṇ**)

pōr tōṇṇu k **kaṭṭuṇṭār** kai pōlva ... kāntaḷ (pari.18:34-35)

[**kaṭṭuṇṭār** < **kaṭṭu** ‘binding’ + **uṇṭār** ‘those who experienced’]

kaṭṭuṇ < **kaṭṭu** (< **kaṭṭu** ‘to tie, bind’) + **uṇ**]

‘the kāntaḷ flowers which are like the **bound** hands of losers in the war’

purivuṇṭa puṇarcci (*kali.142:1*)
 [purivuṇṭa < purivu ‘intertwining’ + uṇṭa ‘that which experienced’
 purivuṇ < purivu (puri ‘to intertwine’) + uṇ]
 ‘union which has **enjoyed the intertwining**’

uru ‘to experience, attain’

(nominal stem + **uru**)

alavuru k kuṭi kūva (*kali.10:5*)
 [alavuru ‘experiencing grief’;
 alavuru < *alavu ‘grief’ (ala ‘to grieve’) + uru]
 ‘as the subjects **experienced grief** and screamed’

ivaṭkē **ceyuru** maṇṭilam mai yāppatu pōl mai il vāḷ mukam pacappu
 ūrummē (*kali.7:7-8*)
 [ceyuru maṇṭilam ‘maṇṭilam which experienced’
 ceyuru < *ceyvu ‘the making’ (cey ‘to do, make’) + uru]
 ‘Lovesick pallor spreads on her flawless bright face as if darkness
 is blended with the moon which **was (man)made.**’

paṭu ‘to experience, befall, suffer’

(nominal stem + **paṭu**)

karantatūum kaiyoṭu **kōṭpaṭṭām** kaṇṭāy (*kali.115:3*)
 [kōṭpaṭu ‘to be caught’;
 kōḷ ‘holding, grabbing’ (< koḷ ‘to grab’) + paṭu]
 ‘**We were caught** with what we concealed, you see.’

kāay k koṇṭa num iyam **toypaṭāmal** ... viṭarakam pukumiṇ
(*malai:365-366*)

[toypaṭu ‘to experience sagging’;
 toy ‘sagging’ (< toy ‘to sag’) + paṭu]

‘Enter the cliff (carefully so that) the musical instruments you are carrying by hanging do not **sag**.’

Formation mechanism: infinitive ending with (kk)a + paṭu/peru

Structure and Example

paṭu ‘to experience’

(infinitive in (kk)a + **paṭu**)

pēey k koḷīyaḷ ivaḷ **enappaṭutal** (kuṟu.263:5)

[**enappaṭu** ‘to be said’; **ena** infinitive (< **en** ‘to say’) + **paṭu**]

‘to be said that she is possessed by a demon’

karutiyatu muṭittalum **kāmurappaṭutalum** (ciṟu.213)

[**kāmurappaṭu** ‘to be desired’;

kāmuṟa infinitive (< **kāmuṟu** ‘to desire’) + **paṭu**]⁴

‘accomplishing what (you) intended and to be desired’

avar vati vayiṇ **nīṅkappaṭiṇē** (kuṟu.395:8)

[**nīṅkappaṭu** ‘to be left behind’;

nīṅka infinitive (< **nīṅku** ‘to leave, depart’) + **paṭu**]

‘if I am left behind as he leaves toward his place’

nī nayantu **uraiyappaṭṭōḷ** (aiṅk.370:3)

[**uraiyappaṭu** ‘to be stayed over (with)’;

uraiya infinitive (< **urai** ‘to stay over’) + **paṭu**]

‘she with whom you stayed’

⁴ Note that **kāmuṟu** itself has two components: **kām** ‘desire, passion’ + **uṟu** ‘to feel, attain.’

(Note that **urāi** ‘to stay over’ is not a verb that has a direct object. Yet, the passive form **urāiyappaṭu** is used. Perhaps it shows the influence of Sanskrit syntax?)

ivaḷ ... ēṟu koḷpavar allāl tiru mā mey tīṇṭalar eṇṟu ... collāl
tarappaṭṭavaḷ (kali.102:9-10, 12)
 [tarappaṭu ‘to be brought’; tara infinitive (< tar ‘to bring’) + paṭu]
 ‘She is someone who **was brought** (over to this field) announcing that no one except those who would take hold of the bull (in the bull fight) could touch her lustrous dark body.’
 (Note that the agent for the passive is in the instrumental: **collāl** ‘by words’)

nārai nalaṇ **uṇappaṭṭa** nalkūr pētai (narr.178:2-3)
 [uṇappaṭu ‘to be enjoyed’; uṇa infinitive (< uṇ ‘to enjoy’) + paṭu]
 ‘the agonizing female whose loveliness **was enjoyed** by the male crane’

pacalaiyāl **uṇappaṭṭāl** (kali.48:16)
 [uṇappaṭu ‘to be eaten’;
 uṇa infinitive (< uṇ ‘to eat, consume’) + paṭu]
 ‘she **who is eaten** by lovesick pallor’
 (Note that the agent for the passive is in the instrumental: **pacalaiyāl** ‘by lovesick pallor’)

kaippaṭukkappaṭṭāy nī (kali.93:15)
 [kaippaṭukka p paṭu ‘to be made to be caught’
 < kaippaṭukka + paṭu;
 kaippaṭukka infinitive < kaippaṭu ‘to befall inside one’s hands; be caught’; kaippaṭu < kai ‘hands’ + paṭu]
 ‘You are caught!’

(Note the double use of **paṭu**. One can interpret it also as a complex sentence: ‘You are caught [**paṭṭāy nī**], as you were caused to be caught [**kaippaṭukka**].’)

emmāl **viyakkappaṭūmor** (*pura.197:9*)

[**viyakkappaṭu** ‘to be admired’;

viyakka infinitive (< **viya** ‘to admire’) + **paṭu**]

‘those who **are admired** by us’

(Note that the agent for the passive is in the instrumental: **emmāl** ‘by us’)

peru ‘to experience, obtain’

(infinitive in a + **peru**)

muntu viṇai etir **varapperutal** kāṇiyar (*pati.42:17*)

[**varapperu** ‘to experience the emerging’;

< **vara** infinitive (< **var** ‘to emerge, come, be within reach’) + **peru**]

‘in order to see that the forthcoming war **experiences an emergence**’

‘in order to see that a war is emerging’

nī emmai vēṇṭuval eṇṇu vilakkiṇai niṇ pōlvār **tīṇṭapperupavō**

(*kali.94:6-8*)

[**tīṇṭapperu** ‘to be touched’;

tīṇṭa infinitive (< **tīṇṭu** ‘to touch’) + **peru**]

‘You intercepted us saying that you desired us. Will people like you **be (ever) touched** (by us)?’

uppu ilāa avi p puḷukkal ... ilipirappiṇṇōṇ īyapperru

(*puṛa.363:12, 14*)

[īyapperu 'to be given'; īya infinitive (< ī 'to give') + peru]

'given the saltless twice-boiled rice by the low-born'

THE PAST STEM

GENERAL: The form that a verb stem assumes to indicate that the action or state indicated by the verb has a completive (or perfective aspect) is here called the “past stem.” The completive aspect does not denote temporality.¹ The past stem serves as a base for the adverbial participle suffix **u**, past adjectival participle suffix **a**, PNG suffixes, the comparative **anna** and **enna**, the quotative **ena** ‘that’, the conditional suffix **āl/ēl**, some nouns, certain particles, and the postposition **uli**.²

¹ Modern scholars, who have discussed the notion of time and tense in Tamil, have come increasingly to believe that Tamil, especially Early Old Tamil, reflects a verb system indicating “perhaps a primary aspectual (and not temporal) dichotomy” (Zvelebil, quoted in Sjoberg [1966:288]). See Ramasamy (1975) and Sjoberg (1968) for further discussions.

² In a very few contexts, the past stem appears to be the same as the non-past stem, and **n** intervenes between the suffix added to the stem: cf. **ānatu** ‘it became’ (*kali.147:3*). Some have concluded that the past tense suffix has a “zero allomorph” and the **n** is a hiatus-filler in such cases (cf. Zvelebil 1970:41). This study considers **ānatu** and the only other similar form in this period, **pōna** (*pari.22:11*), as contracted forms of ***āyīnatu** and ***pōyīna** respectively, and takes **y** as the past/completive marker and **in** as an inflectional increment. Cf. **āyīna** ‘they became’ (*pati.13:19*) and **poyīnar** ‘they went’ (*aink.320:4*). See also “A

Among them, the adverbial participle suffix, the comparative **anna** and **enna**, the quotative **ena**, some nouns, certain particles, and the postposition **uli** are added directly to the past stem. The conditional suffix **āl** is added directly to certain past stems while **in** intervenes between the past stem and the suffix **āl** in certain other situations. The conditional suffix **ēl** is added directly to the past stem. The adjectival participle suffix and PNG suffixes are added directly to the past stem, or **an/in** intervenes between the past stem and the PNG. In some cases, this **an/in** seems to denote a “present perfect” tense, but in most cases does not. Therefore, it could be construed, after the tradition, as a **cāriyai** “inflectional increment.” Examples of these occurrences are provided below.

See footnote 3 in “Adjectival Nouns or Appellative nouns” for an explanation of **an**. See “The Adverbial Participle,” “The Past Adjectival Participle,” “Past Personal Verbs,” “Past Participial Nouns,” and “The Conditional” for specific examples of how the past stem is used.

FORMATION: Certain markers known as the “past tense markers,” “past tense suffixes,” or simply the “past markers” are suffixed to a verb stem to make the latter a “past stem.” It is preferable to call these markers “completive aspectual markers” or simply, “completive markers.” The past/completive markers are **i**, **y**, **t**, **tt**, and **nt**. **t**, **tt**, and **nt** are contextual variants of what can be understood just as a consonantal marker which could be represented as ***T**.

See “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis” where classical Tamil stem-types are discussed. Among those, stems marked as Type (i) and Type (ii) take the past/completive marker **i** or **y**. Type (iii/c) takes the past/completive marker **i**. Stems which are marked as Type (a) take the

Note on the Verb **ān** for a discussion of the reduction **in** > **n**.

past/completive marker (t)t or nt. Stems marked as Type (b) take the past/completive marker tt or nt.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: stem + past/completive marker

Past/Completive Marker

Example

i:

The stem ends with a consonant. The marker i may be lengthened when the stem contains a short vowel. When the marker i is not lengthened, the final consonant is doubled in the stem containing the short vowel. Otherwise, there is no change.

tiṇai uṇṇi ... kēlai uṇkum naṇ malai (aiṇk.268:2, 3, 4)

[uṇ 'to eat']

'the mountain where the pig sleeps **having eaten** the millet'

ciṇu puṇam putaiya vāri

(aka.8:16)

[vār 'to comb']

'**combing** (the hair) so that (your) small back is covered'

tūvaṇku etiriya mīṇ

(aka.10:1-2)

[etir 'to react, respond']

'fish which **reacted** to the sprinkle'

niṇṇai yāṇ collina

(kali.116:13)

[col 'to tell, reveal']

'what I **told** you'

pirinturai **valli** cenru vinai enṇuti āyin (aka.191:11)

[**val** 'to be capable; skilled']

'If you are thinking about the task you would do by going away and **being capable** of living away (from her), ...'

velīyōṇ ivan (pura.125:11)

[**vel** 'to conquer']

'He is the one who **won**.'

ce-v-viral **koḷīya** ceṇ kēḷ viḷakkattu (neṭu:144)

[**koḷ** 'to take hold, grasp']

'the red colored brightness which she **has put on** (her) red finger'

'the red colored bright ring **grasping** her red finger'

'the red colored bright ring on her red finger'

pōtoṭu **potuḷiya** vēlai veṇ pū (pura.215:2-3)

[**potuḷ** 'to crowd up']

'the white flowers of vēlai which was **crowded** with buds'

'the white vēlai flowers which were **surrounded** by buds'

cērppanai k kaṇṭāy pōla p putuvatu **kaviṇṇai** (kali.128:6-7)

[**kaviṇ** 'to adorn']

'You **acquired** fresh **attractiveness** as if you met with the man from the sea-shore.'

'You look attractive as if you just had a rendezvous with the man from the sea-shore.'

i:

The stem ends with a vowel. The disyllabic stem is open with short syllables. The stem-final vowel may be lengthened and/or a glide is inserted between the stem and the suffix **i**. The stem-final **a** is lengthened as **ai**, **i** is lengthened as **ī** or **ai**, while **u** is lengthened as **ai** very rarely. The marker **i** is added directly to the stem ending

with **ī** or **ai**. When the stem-final **u** does not become **ai**, it is deleted and subsequently, the past/completive marker **i** is lengthened.

paṇṭum inaiyaiyō eṇa **vinaviṇaḷ** yāyē (narr.55:6-7)

[**vinavi** < **viṇa** ‘to enquire’ + glide **v** + **i**]

‘“Were you like this in the past too?” **enquired** my mother.’

mellitṇ **viṇaii** ... emar kuṛai kūṛa (aka.300:15, 19)

[**viṇa** ‘to enquire’]

‘as our kin **enquire** gently about yourself **and** make a request to you’

‘as our kin greet you gently and make a request to you’

kaṇicci pōḷ kōṭu **cīi** ēṛu toḷūu p pukuttaṇar (kali.101:8-9)

[**cī** ‘to whittle, sharpen, gather as pile’]

‘They **sharpened** the horns of the bulls (to look) like a trident and made them enter the stall.’

toṭalai **taii** p puṇakkīḷi kaṭiyum pūṇkaṇ pētai (kuru.142:1-2)

[**tai** ‘to decorate, wear, put on’]

‘the innocent young woman who has **put on** a garland and chases away the parrots in the millet field’

iyavar araṇam kāṇātu mātiram **tuḷaiiya** naṇantalai p paiṇṇīlam (pati.17:7-9)

[**tuḷa** ‘to stir up’]

‘the vast green land where people with musical instruments, without refuge, **stirred up** (all) the directions’

māl aṅku uṭaiya ... akal aṛai k **kuvaii** (kuṛi:97, 98)

[**kuvi** ‘to pile up’]

‘**piling up** the overwhelming (flowers) on the wide rock’

eṇ ai vāliya palavē ... polantoti **ceṇṇiyōṇē** (narr.136:4, 9)
[ceṇṇi 'to be tight']

'May he prosper, my man, who **made** my bangles become **tight**.'

puli cettu **verṇi**ya pukar muka vēlam (aka.12:11)
[veru 'to shun']

'elephant with a speckled face which **shunned** (the vēṇkai tree) thinking it was a tiger'

tol nilai **vaḷṇi**ya niṇ toṭi (narr.332:3-4)
[vaḷu 'to slip']

'Your bracelets **slipped** from their original place.'

vār mukil muḷakkiṇ maḷa kaḷiṇu **mikṇi** (pati.84:11)
[miku 'to be aroused, excited']

'young male elephants, **excited** like the roaring array of clouds'

vālai ṇmtaṭi vallitiṇ **vakai** (narr.120:5)
[vaku 'to split']

'**splitting** the juicy stalk of the plantain tree'

(Note that the stem-final **u** changed to **ai**.)

kāl iṇukiruka t tāḷ **iṇṇi** (pari.10:11)
[iṇṇu 'to put down, drop'; kāl 'lower part of the waist ornament']

'**putting** the locket so that the lower part is tightened'

tuyaram **uṇṇi**yinaḷ emmē ... ivaḷ iṇṇa tāyē (narr.8:5, 10)
[uru 'to experience']

'Her mother who gave birth to her **made** us **experience** grief.'

'Her mother who gave birth to her caused us grief.'

i:

The stem is non-monosyllabic and ends with a vowel. The disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. The stem-final vowel is deleted if it is **u**. There is no other change.

paṇṇirai ūrtiyotu **nalkiyōṇē** (pura.399:31-32)
 [nalku 'to give away, provide']
 'He gave away many cattle with a cart.'

atu kēṭṭu t talai **īraiñciṇalē** aṇṇai (narr.147:10-11)
 [īraiñcu 'to stoop, bow']
 'Our mother listened to it and bowed her head.'

eḷutiyanna koṭi (aka.297:13)
 [eḷutu 'to write, paint']
 'the vine that looked like it was painted'
 (An instance of past/completive stem eḷuti + anna.)

nerunai em muṇ **tappiyōṇ** tampiyotu ... nālai c ceykuveṇ amar (pura.304:4-5, 6)
 [tappu 'to wrong']
 'I shall wage war with the younger brother of the man who wronged my older brother yesterday.'

kaviṇ **vāṭi** ... neytarpū c cāmpum pulattāṅkaṇ (paṭṭ:10-12)
 [vāṭu 'to wither']
 'in the region where the neytal flowers wilt losing their abundant/fascinating beauty'

putalvaṇ tāy avaṇ puṇam **kavaiyiṇalē** (kuru.359:6)
 [kavai 'to embrace']
 'His son's mother embraced his back.'

tt³:

Certain monosyllabic stems and disyllabic stems ending with ā, i, ī, u, ū, ai, o, ō, y, r, l, ḷ, and ḷ take this marker. The past/completive marker **tt** and the stem-final consonant ḷ assimilate and result in **ṭṭ**. Similarly, stem-final l and the following past/completive marker **tt** assimilate and result in **ṛṛ**.⁴

pūttanṛu peruma nī kātta nāṭē (pati.13:28)

[kā 'to shield, protect']

'The country that you **protected** will (certainly) flourish.'

kaḷavum puḷittana (aka.394:1)

[puli 'to become tart, sour']

'The kaḷavu fruits too have **become tart**.'

irumpu vaṭittanna karum-kai-k-kāṇavan (aka.172:6)

[vaṭi 'to cast, mould']

³ This marker **tt** does carry a causative/effective significance as opposed to the marker **nt**. One cannot always find a non-causative form in **nt** corresponding to every verb form that has **tt** as its past/completive marker. In such cases, the form with **tt** as its past/completive marker seems at least to have an object: e.g., **muḷ uṭutta** kāṭu 'the jungle which rises wrapping the thorns around' (peru.184). Or the verb form with **tt** as the past/completive marker seems to contain the stem which has resulted from mutation: e.g., **niruttu** 'making ... stand' (peru.344). Here, **niru** reflects stem mutation: **niru** 'to make stand, stay' < **nil** 'to stand.'

However, a case like **viyarttanen** 'I perspired' (kuru.84:1) is no doubt enigmatic, because it does not seem to have a causative/effective significance and yet contains the marker **tt**. Such verbs perhaps conveyed a different semantic significance in old Tamil than how they are understood in modern Tamil.

⁴ Some might consider the past/completive marker to be **t** rather than **tt** in such cases: cf Hart and Hart (1979:119) and P.S. Subrahmanyam (1971:106-107).

‘the forest man who has strong/dark arms as if (they are) **cast** in iron’

ātal niṇ akattu aṭakki c cātal niṇka emakku **īttanai** (*pura.91:10-11*)
[**ī** ‘to give’]

‘You concealed the (fact of) prosperity in you(r self) and **gave** (the fruit) to me so my weariness would leave.’

perum peyar maṇṇarkku oppa maṇai **vakuttu** (*neṭu:78*)
[**vaku** ‘to define, specify’]

‘**specifying** the land appropriate for kings with great names’

cellā c celvam **mikuttanai** (*pura.160:27*)
[**miku** ‘to abound, increase’]

‘You **increased** riches which do not vanish.’

muḷ **uṭuttu** eḷu kāṭu (*peru:184-185*)
[**uṭu** ‘to wear, wrap around’]

‘the jungle which rises **surrounded** by thorns’

vaikārp̄pu eḷunta mai paṭu parappiṇ **eṭuttēru** (*pati.41:22-23*)
[**eṭu** ‘to arouse, lift’]

‘**arousing and tossing** (the enemies) in the dark surface (of the sea) where constant tumult was rising’

(An instance of past stem **eṭutt** + verbal noun **ēru** < **eri** ‘to toss.’)

ceṇṇōrai vaḷi **taputtanai** (*pura.239:4*)
[**tapu** ‘to destroy’]

‘**He destroyed** the descendants of his adversaries.’

karuttōr uṇu muraṇ (*pati.66:9-10*)
[**karu** ‘to be angry’]

‘severe/intense hostility of those **who were angry**’

kūḷi **niruttu** ōmpiya kuṟuntāl ēṟṟai (peru:344)
 [nīru ‘to make stay/stand’]
 ‘the short-legged male (animal) which was **made to stay** in a pit and shielded’

pūḷi **pūtta** puḷal kālāmpi (ciṟu:134)
 [pū ‘to spread (like flowers)’]
 ‘hollow stemmed mushroom that **spread** on the dust’

evaṇ kol eṇṇu niṇaikkalum **ninaittilai** (narr:297:5)
 [niṇai ‘to think, consider’]
 ‘You **did not** even **think** what the reason was.’

nallōrkku **ottaṇir** nīyir iṇtō celvaṟku **ottaṇam** yām (aka:26:19-20)
 [o ‘to be agreeable’]
 ‘You **are agreeable** to (other) lovely women. Here, we (hon.) are agreeable to our darling son.’

celvar ... putalvar ciṟu tōḷ **kōtta** ... paṟai (narr:58:1-2)
 [kō ‘to hang with a string’]
 ‘drums which the male children of wealthy people **hung** on their shoulders’

maṟavar pakaḷi **māyttēṇa** maruṅkul nuṇukiya pē mutir naṭukal (aka:297:6-7)
 [māy ‘to lose luster, fade, mar, wear out’]
 ‘the frightening hero-stone whose sides are thinned, **worn out** by the warriors’ arrows’
 (An instance of past stem **māytt** + **ēṇa** ‘thus, so that.’)

yāṇ **viyarttanēṇ** (kuṟu:84:1)
 [viyar ‘to perspire’]
 ‘I **perspired**.’

putalvaṇum poytal **karr**ṇaṇ (narr.166:7)
 [kal ‘to mature by experience, learn’; **karr** < kal + (t)t]
 ‘(our) male child also has **learned** to play’

corratūum paṇṇāl niṇam tirintāl (pari.12:52)
 [col ‘to reveal’; **corr** < col + (t)t]
 ‘she did not hold on to what (he) **told** and became pale’

paḷam **ūl**ttu p payam pakarvu aṇiyā mayaṇku aril mutu pāl (pura.381:8-9)
 [ūl ‘to ripen’]
 ‘old desolate place with crowded vines where fruits **are mature** but
 the informing/announcement of the yield is unknown’

nī kaṇṇaṇaiyō kaṇṇār k **kēṭṭ**aṇaiyō (kuru.75:1)
 [kēl ‘to hear; be audible’; **kēṭṭ** < kēl + (t)t]
 ‘**Did** you see or **did** you **hear** from those who saw?’

entaikum koṭukka eṇa **vēṭṭ**ēmē (aink.6:6)
 [vēl ‘to wish for’; **vēṭṭ** < vēl + (t)t]
 ‘We **wished** that our father also would give us away (in marriage).’

t:

Certain disyllabic stems ending with **u** preceded by **k**, **ṭ**, **r**, or **l**, all the stems ending with **ṇ**, certain monosyllabic stems ending with **y**, some monosyllabic and all the disyllabic stems ending with **l**, certain stems ending with **l**, and all the stems ending with **ṇ** take this marker.⁵

⁵ Historically, it seems, when the consonantal type of past/completive marker (*T) was innovated, roots which ended with **ṇ** but did not take the formative suffix **u** took the past/completive marker **t**. Stems with the formative suffix **u** retained the past/completive

When the consonant preceding the stem-final **u** is **k**, **ṭ**, or **r**, the stem-final is deleted. Then, the past-marker assimilates to the stem-final **k**, **ṭ**, and **r**: **k + t > kk**; **ṭ + t > ṭṭ**; **r + t > rr**.⁶

When the monosyllabic stem has a consonant other than **y** as its final, the final consonant and the past/completive marker are assimilated: **ṇ + t > ṇṭ**; **l + t > nr**; **ḷ + t > ṇṭ**; **n + t > nr**.

en mukam nōkki **nakkanaṇ** (kuṛi:183)
[**naku** 'to smile, chuckle'; **naku + t > nakk**]
'He looked at my face and **smiled**.'

entaiyum nīl nira p perum kaṭal **pukkanaṇ** (kuṛu.269:3-4)
[**puku** 'to enter, go into'; **puku + t > pukk**]
'My father also **went onto** the big blue-colored sea.'

pulavar nuṇṇitiṇ kayiru **iṭṭu** (neṭu:76)
[**iṭu** 'to put down, lay down'; **iṭu + t > iṭṭ**]
'The learned people **laid down** the rope carefully and ...'

marker **i**: e.g., **pēṇ(u)** 'to cherish, nurture' + **i > pēṇi** (ciṛu:244), whereas **māṇ** 'to be glorious' + **t > māṇṭ** (cf. **māṇṭaṇa pati**.19:27).

⁶ This particular analysis follows Zvelebil (1970:40) who gives examples of some of these changes: **cuṭu > cuṭṭu**; **miku > mikku**; **peru > perṛa**. In fact, the same process can be understood as stem mutation. See "Morphophonemics" for stem mutation.

If stem mutation is taken as the process which produces **kk** from **k**, **ṭṭ** from **ṭ**, and **rr** from **r** in certain contexts, then it would be helpful to explain forms like **cettōr** 'carcasses; those who are dead' (*puṛa*.240.8) as derived from **cetu** 'to rot; lose life', instead of positing an irregular root ***cā** 'to die.' See 5.8 in "Morphophonemics" for more examples of this kind.

viruntin vāḷkkaiyoṭu peruntiru **arrena** (pati.71:19)
[**aru** ‘to sever’]

‘since great prosperity **severed** due to strange living’
(An instance of past stem **arr** + **ena** ‘thus, so.’)

cunai-p-pū k **kurru** (kuru.142:1)
[**kuṛu** ‘to pick’; **kuṛu** + **t** > **kurru**]
‘picking flowers from the pool’

māru **porutu** oṭṭiya pukalvin (kuri:135)
[**poru** ‘to match, fight’]
‘the pride of **having matched** and driven away the enemy’

tāl niḷal maruṅkil aṇukupu kuṛuki t **tolutu** muṇ niṛkuvir āyin (poru:149-150)
[**toḷu** ‘to worship, bow’]
‘if you would approach the shadow of his feet and stand in front of him **having done obeisance**’

nīyum **kaṇṭu** numaroṭum eṇṇi aṇivarintu aḷaval vēṇṭum (narr.32:5)
[**kāṇ** ‘to see’]
‘You must **see** it for yourself, think it over along with your kin, and discuss it knowing what needs to be known.’

perum pāṇ kāval **pūṇṭeṇa** (narr.40:3)
[**pūṇ** ‘to wear’]
‘as the big bard **took on** (the task of) guarding’
(An instance of past stem **pūṇṭ** + **ena** ‘thus.’)

nīḷal muṇṇil nila ural **peytu** (peru:96)
[**pey** ‘to pour’]

‘**pouring** (the paddy) into the mortar made in the ground in the shady porch’

eri **kānraṇṇa** pūñciṇai (malai:498)
 [kāl ‘to spurt, emit’]
 ‘flowering branch which looks like it is **emitting** flame’
 (An instance of past stem **kānr** + comparative **anna**.)

vēṅkai koykuvam **cenruli** (aka.48:6)
 [cel to go’]
 ‘when we **went** to pick vēṅkai flowers’
 (An instance of past stem **cenr** + postposition **uli**.)

koṇmū māka vicumpiṇ naṭuvu **ninrāṅku** (puṛa.35:17-18)
 [nil ‘to stand’]
 ‘as if the rain cloud **stayed** in the center of the heavenly skies’
 (An instance of past stem **ninr** + particle **āṅku**.)

ceru p **pukanru** eṭutta ... neṭum koṭi (tiru:67)
 [pukal ‘to announce, declare’]
 ‘tall flag which was raised **announcing** war’

tuvarai **āṇṭu** (puṛa.201:10)
 [āḷ ‘to rule over’]
 ‘**ruling over** (the city of) Tuvarai’

vicumpu uṭaṇ **iruṇṭu** vemmai nīṅka (aka.283:11)
 [iruḷ ‘to darken’]
 ‘as it **darkened** all over the sky and the heat was gone’

āymakaḷ tayir **koṭu** vanta tacumpu (*pura.33:2-3*)
 [koḷ ‘to take hold, receive’]
 ‘the pot in which the shepherdess **held** the yogurt and brought’
 ‘the pot in which the shepherdess brought the yogurt’

iḷantaḷir koytu **koṇṭu** (*pura.159:10*)
 [koḷ ‘to take hold’]
 ‘picking young fresh leaves and **holding** (on to)/**carrying** them’
 ‘picking young fresh leaves and **hooking** on to them’

nīṭu vālka eṇru yāṇ neṭum kaṭai kuṟuki (*pura.237:1*)
 [nīḷ ‘to extend’]
 ‘I approached his tall front yard praising “May you live **long**” and ...’

cinṇāl āṇraṇai āku (*aka.325:14*)
 [āṇ ‘to be content’]
 ‘**Be contented** for a few days.’

īṇru nāl uḷanta mel naṭai maṭa p piṭi (*aka.85:6*)
 [īṇ ‘to give birth’]
 ‘gently walking naive female elephant which **has given birth and** is exhausted for the day’

kiḷai k **kavinru** eḷutarum kiḷ nīr c ce-v-arumpu (*tiru:29*)
 [kavin ‘to adorn, fascinate’]
 ‘red buds which rise up in the low waters **adorning** the branches’

nt:

Certain monosyllabic stems and disyllabic stems ending with **a, i, ī, u, e, ai, o, ō, y, r**, and **l** take this marker. In the case of the stems **var** ‘to come (about)’, **tar** ‘to bring (about)’, ***allār** ‘to be filled

with distress' (al 'distress' + ār 'to be full'), *mālār 'to be full of bewilderment or laziness' (māl 'bewilderment, laziness, stupor' + ār 'to be full'), the stem-final r is lost in the process.

nīr aṛa **vaṛanta** nirampā nīl iṭai (aka.53:5)
[vaṛa 'to turn dry']
'endlessly long path **which has grown dry** without water'

atu **viyantaneṇ** tōli ... vatuvai eṇṇu avar vanta nāṇṇē (narr.386:8,10)
[viya 'to admire, adore']
'When he came to marry you, I **admired** it.'

maram talai **karintu** nilam payam vāṭa (aka.169:1)
['kari 'to be scorched']
'as the tree tops were **scorched** and the yield on the ground withered'

acai naṭai p pētai **melintilaḷ** (kuru.182:6-7)
[meli 'to be weary, grow thin']
'the poor young staggering woman **is not weary**'

vēntu ... vālcci **vīntu** uku pōrkkaḷattu āṭum kō (pati.56:7-8)
[vī 'to perish']
'the king who dances in the battlefield where (enemy) kings fall down, their prosperity **having perished**'

maral **vakuntu** toṭutta cem pūn kaṇṇi (pura.264:2)
[vaku 'to split, divide']
'the garland of red flowers strung by **split** maral fibre'

ventu āru poṇṇiṇ anti pūppa (aka.71:6)
 [ve ‘to steam up, be hot’]
 ‘as dusk spread like gold that **has been melted** and is cooling off’

cēnta ceyalai (malai:160)
 [ce ‘to become red’]⁷
 ‘the ceyalai leaves which **turned red**’

vār kuḷai kaḷaintēṇa (neṭu:139)
 [kaḷai ‘to remove’]
 ‘since (she) **removed** (her) long earrings’
 (An instance of past stem **kaḷaint** + quotative infinitive **eṇa** ‘that, thus.’)

takai peṇa mukainta ... vaṇa mulai (aka.177:18)
 [mukai ‘to grow like buds’]
 ‘beautiful breasts **which have grown** properly (like buds)’

nontu nontu ... uṇkaṇ pāvai aḷitaru veḷlam nīntum nālē (narr.177:8-10)
 [no ‘to suffer internally’]
 ‘the time when I **repeatedly suffer internally** and the apple of my attractive eye swims in destructive flood of tears’

puṇam pōntu (neṭu:172)
 [pō ‘to go’]
 ‘going outside’

⁷ Some might consider **cēnta** as derived from **civanta** ‘that which is red.’

valavaṇ valpu āyntu ūra (narr.11:8)
 [āy ‘to select’]
 ‘as the capable charioteer **selected** the reins and rode’

allāntāṇ pōla p peyarntāṇ (kali.111:21)
 [allā(r) ‘to be distressed/grieved’
 < al ‘distress, darkness’ + ār ‘to be full’]⁸
 ‘He moved away as if he **was distressed.**’

kōṭu vārntaṇṇa veṇ pū t tālai (narr.203:4)
 [vār ‘to split straight, comb, straighten’]
 ‘the screw pine with white flowers which appear as if (it was a)
 white conch **split straight**’
 (An instance of past/completive stem **vārnt** + **anna** ‘like’)

eri ciṇam tavaṇta irum kaṭarru aṭai mutal (aka.75:4)
 [tavaṇ ‘to spread, diffuse’]
 ‘at the root of the dense dark forest where scorching flames **spread out**’

piṭiyōṭu kaṭiru puṇarntēṇṇa kuru neṭum tūmpoṭum muḷavu p punarntu
 icaippa (aka.301:16-17)
 ‘the short pipes and the long pipes sounded together with the drums
as if a bull elephant joined its female elephant’
 (An instance of past/completive stem **puṇarnt** + **ēṇṇa** ‘like, as if’)

y:

Here, the stem has open syllables and ends with a short vowel other than **u** or with a long vowel other than **ī** or **ai**. The stem-final

⁸ See “The Compound Verb Stem” for a discussion of this type of stem.

short vowel **a** is lengthened. The stem-final long vowel may or may not be lengthened further.⁹

nī cērnta il **vināyinaṇ** tēroṭu tiritarum pākaṇ (kali.68:16-17)
 [vinā ‘to enquire’]
 ‘the driver who wanders with his chariot **enquiring** about the house you have reached’

āru vaṇappu eyta alar **tāyina** (aink.483:1)
 [tā ‘to spread’]
 ‘The flowers **spread** and (so) the path attained beauty.’

aviḷ pū **muṭiyinaḷ** (narr.42:11)
 [muṭi ‘to tie up’]
 ‘she (who) **tied up** the slipping/loose flowers’

uruva p pal pū t **tūuy** (tiru:241)
 [tū ‘to scatter’]
 ‘(they) **scattered** many colorful flowers, and ...’

avaṇai āku eṇa **ēyaḷ** maṇ yāyum (narr.134:5-6)
 [ē ‘to command, order’]
 ‘Mother also **ordered** “Be there.” ’

⁹ In these examples, what precedes the **y** is the stem. Here, the **y** is taken as the “past/completive marker” instead of as a glide or hiatus-filler. The reason is that the adverbial participles of these stems end with **i** or **y**. A good attested example is **ēey** < **ē** ‘to command, order’ (pati.11:13). See also note 3 in “Past Personal Verbs.”

Perhaps it is better to consider **y** as a variant of **i** in these contexts, because **i** and **y** have been found to be interchangeable in word-final position (cf. Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rule 58). For an analysis of **y** as a hiatus-filler, see Zvelebil (1970:41).

pal viyar am tukil talaiyil **tuṭaiyinaḷ** (narr.120:7-8)

[**tuṭai** 'to wipe']

'She **wiped** her perspiration with the end of her fine clothing.'

ilampaṭu kālai āyiṇum pulampal **pōyiṇru** pūṭṭa eṇ kaṭumpu
(pura.380:15-16)

[**pō** 'to go']

'Although it was a time of having nothing, loneliness **was gone** from my wide spread group (of kith and kin).'

pōoya vaṇṭiṇāl pul eṇṇa tuṇai (kali.134:7)

[**pō** 'to go']

'waterfront which was lifeless because of the honeybees **that left** (the flowers)'

'waterfront which was lifeless because the honeybees had left (the flowers)'

THE NON-PAST STEM

GENERAL: See also “The Past Stem.” The form that a stem assumes to indicate that the action or state referred to by the verb/noun underlying the stem has an incomplete (or imperfective) aspect is here called the “non-past stem.” The action/state indicated by the verb/noun might be in progress or forthcoming. Certain markers which indicate this kind of incomplete aspect of the action are normally known as the “non-past tense markers,” “non-past tense suffixes,” or “present tense markers.” These markers are here called the “non-past markers” or “non-completive markers.”

Depending upon the non-past/non-completive marker it contains, the non-past stem serves as a base for non-past adjectival participle suffix, PNG suffixes, the comparative **anna**, the postpositions **aḷavai** and **uli**, infinitive suffix, the conditional suffix **in/il**, the comparative **anna**, certain nouns and particles, the marker **inum** that signifies the senses ‘although’ and ‘even if’, and all the negative forms.

See “The Non-Past Adjectival Participle,” “Non-Past Personal Verbs,” “Non-Past Participial Nouns,” “The Infinitive,” “The Conditional,”

“The Concessive of Fact,” “The Concessive of Supposition,” and the chapters on negative forms such as the negative personal verbs and negative participial nouns to find out how the non-past stem is used. Examples of nouns and postpositions added to the non-past stem are given below with others.

Formation: There are three ways to derive a non-past stem:

- (i) by using the bare verb stem;
- (ii) by suffixation: one of the non-past/non-completive markers **(k)k**, **(t)t**, **ñ/n**, **(p)p**, **m**, or **v** is added to the bare stem;
- (iii) by periphrasis:
 - a) adding **(k)kil** ‘to be able’ to the bare stem;
 - b) adding **iru** ‘to sit, remain’, **nil** ‘to stand, stay’, or **(k)kiṭa** ‘to lie still’ to a verbal participle (adverbial participle or infinitive) ending with **ā**;
 - c) adding **nil** to an infinitive ending with **ūu**.¹

¹ Traditional commentators identify **iru**, **nil**, and **kiṭa** as signifying a “present” time, but do not specify that they follow a verbal participle ending with **ā** or **ūu**: cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam: 131-132, Rule 202.

What is really happening is that the **ā** or **ūu** which ends the participle is, in fact, the suffix which marks the non-completive aspect of the action/state indicated by the verb root underlying the participle. But whenever the verb which immediately follows the participle happens to indicate a steady state like **iru**, **nil**, or **kiṭa**, referring to specific states of being such as sitting down (**iru**), standing up (**nil**), and lying still (**kiṭa**), the grammarians do not comment on the **ūu**, but separate the suffix **ā** from the participle and group it together with the following verb (**iru**, **nil**, or **kiṭa** in their subsequently conjugated forms) and refer to the resulting combination (**āyiru**, **ānil**, or **ākiṭa**) as “the present tense marker”: cf. Naṅṇūl, Rule 143, which includes **āniṇru** in the list of present tense affixes like **kinru** and **kiru**. Noticing that not only **nil** but **iru** and **kiṭa** also participate in this process, the commentators add them to the list of items indicating the “present” time: cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram,

See “The Infinitive” for the use of **ā** and **ūu** and “A Note on the Verb **ā**” for more information on **ā**.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: Using bare verb stem.

With some exceptions, monosyllabic verb stems and disyllabic stems are used as their respective non-past/non-completive stems if the verb underlying the stem is non-causative/affective. That is, the action indicated by the verb has no object or it affects the subject.

Some of the obvious exceptions are **pū** ‘to spread (like red blossoms)’, **kal** ‘to mature’, **nil** ‘to stand’, **kol** ‘to spin’, **naṭa** ‘to walk’, **para** ‘to fly’,

Cēṇāvaraiyam:131-132, Rule 202.

Things would be much simpler if one would take the verbal participle suffixes **ā** and **ūu** as the actual markers of the incomplete aspect and consider the verbs (**iru**, **nil**, and **kiṭa**) which follow such participles to be separate.

Now, **āyirunt** < **ā** + **y** + **iru** + **nt**; **āniṇr** < **ā** + **nil** + **t**; **ūuniṇr** < **ūu** + **nil** + **t**; **ākkiṭant** < **ā** + **k** + **kiṭa** + **nt**; **kiṇr** < **kil** + **t**; **kiṇp** < **kil** + **p**. This analysis would tell us that the **t** or **nt** which follows **iru**, **nil**, **kiṭa**, or **kil** signifies an incomplete aspect of the action/state, while the **p(p)** in the same place indicates a forthcoming aspect of the action/state underlying the verb roots preceding **ā**, **ūu** as well as **iru**, **nil**, **kiṭa**, and **kil**.

As a literary reference to get the semantics of **iru** and **kiṭa**, consider *kuṟu.370:2-5*. This poem describes how the lovers exist as two bodies appearing to have two sides if they sit together (**iruppin**) and how they appear to have only one side when they are lying still (**kiṭappin**): **ūraṇḍu iruppin iru maruṅkiṇamē** ‘We have two sides if I sit up with the Ūraṇ’; **kiṭappin villaka viralil porunti avaṇ nallakam cēriṇ oru maruṅkiṇamē** ‘If I am lying still with him, we join like the ring on a finger; and we have only one side if I join his lovely chest/if he joins my lovely chest.’

Commentators give a different interpretation for **nallakam** in *kuṟu.370:5* to mean ‘good home’ which differs from my interpretation ‘good chest.’ Nevertheless, the point is to understand that **iru** and **kiṭa** in classical Tamil refer to two specific steady states.

and **iru** 'to remain, sit' which take the suffix **(k)k** or **(p)p**. And the verb **ninai** 'to think' is used with or without the suffix **kk**.

Marker *Example*

Nothing: PNG or other suffixes are added directly to the verb stem, with a glide intervening occasionally

pari y uṭai vayan̄ku tāḷ pantin̄ tāva (*narr.249:7*)
[tā 'to leap']
'as the pacing brisk feet of the horse **leap** like a ball'

maññai ... naṇantalai pulampa k kūum (*kurū.391:7, 8-9*)
[kū 'to screech']
'The peacocks **are screeching** as the vast region resounds.'

vēḷam ... tam kuḷuvoṭu puṇarntu pōm kuṇru (*kali.25:9, 10-11*)
[pō 'to go, proceed']
'hill through which the elephants **proceed** with their group'

tōḷṭai muyakkam nīyum veyyai (*aka.112:10*)
[vey 'to like, desire']
'You also **desire** the embracing between (your and your lover's) shoulders.'

iṇnum ... uḷḷēn (*puṛa.365:7, 9*)
[uḷ 'to exist']
'I still **exist**.'

ūraṇ koṭumai nāṇi nallaṇ enrum yāmē allāṇ ennum eṇ taṭa meṇ tōḷē (*aink.11:2-4*)
[eṇ 'to say, utter']

‘Ashamed of the Ūraṇ’s cruelty, I say “He is a good person”; My soft curvaceous shoulders **say** “He is not.” ’

viḷuppuṇ **taṇimār** kāppu eṇa ... koṭicciyar pāṭal (malai:303, 304)
[**taṇi** ‘to heal’]
‘hill-women’s singing as protection **to heal** the wounds of war heroes’

niṇaiyū kālai nīyū ... avarkku aṇaiyai allai (puṛa.213:7-8)
[**niṇai** ‘to think’]
‘Come **to think** of it, you too are not like that for him.’

kīḷ nīrāṇ mīṇ **vaḷaṅkuntu** (puṛa.396:1)
[**vaḷaṅku** ‘to move around’]
‘The fish **move around** in the low waters.’

āṇā c ciṛumaiyaḷ iḷaḷum **tēmpum** (kuṛi:26)
[**tēmpu** ‘to sob’]
‘She too **is sobbing**, feeling down endlessly.’

Formation mechanism: suffixation

stem + non-past/non-completive marker (k)k/ñ/(t)t/n/(p)p/m/v

Monosyllabic stems and disyllabic stems take the non-past/non-completive marker **kk**, **tt**, or **pp** when the action underlying the verb is transitive/effective. That is, the action indicated by the verb has an object or it affects someone/something other than the subject. Although they are not intrinsically transitive/effective, some exceptional stems like **pū** ‘to spread (like red blossoms)’, **naṭa** ‘to walk’,

para ‘to fly’, **oli** ‘to sound’, and **iru** ‘to sit, remain’ take the non-past/non-completive marker **kk**, **tt**, or **pp** instead of **k**, **t**, **p**, or **v**.²

Monosyllabic stems and disyllabic stems take the marker **k**, **t**, **p**, or **v** when the action underlying the verb is non-causative/affective.³ That is, the action indicated by the verb has no object or it affects the subject. Although they are transitive/effective, stems like **nukar** ‘to enjoy’ take the marker **k**, **t**, **p**, or **v** instead of **kk**, **tt**, or **pp**.

The non-past/non-completive marker (t)t is restricted to preceding the first person plural suffix **um** and the second person singular and plural suffixes. There is only one exception, **pukutum** (third person neuter singular), which is treated below. The non-past/non-completive markers **ñ**, **n**, and **m** are restricted to adjectival and participial nouns.

An enunciative **u**, which might be considered as a formative suffix, is added to some consonant-final stems before adding the non-past/non-completive marker. When (k)k is the non-past/non-completive marker, the **u** follows it. Also the glide **v** intervenes between that marker with **u** and the PNG suffix that does not begin with **u**.

² **kk** varies with **pp**:

irukkuvēn (*kali.142:32*) *vs.* **iruppēn** (*kali.75:23*)

³ **k** varies with **v** and nothing:

celkuvai (*puṛa.160:14*) *vs.* **celvai** (*puṛa.103:5*)

pōkum (*kali.22:20*) *vs.* **pōm** < **pō** + **um** (*kali.25:11*)

*Marker**Structure and Example***(k)k:**

vaḷu iṇṇu paḷakiya kiḷamaiyar ākiṇum (puṛa.216:3)

[ā 'to be']⁴

'although they **have** the claim to have been flawlessly acquainted with'

pirivu nāḷum pala ākuva

(kuṛu.104:5)

[ā 'to be']

'The days of separation are **becoming** many.'

kaṭi naṛai pukaii k kākkaṁ vammō kātal am tōḷi

(puṛa.281:6-7)

[kā 'to protect']

'My loving friend, come, **let us** burn protective fragrant things and **protect** (the warrior's wounds from the animals).'

kal atar k kavalai pōkiṇ ... arum tuyar tarum ivaḷ paṇi vār kaṇṇē

(aka.77:12, 19)

[pō 'to go']

'**If** you **go** through the intersection / forked way which is full of stony paths, her tearful eyes will give intense grief.'

cuṭar kāy curam pōkum nummai

(kali.22:20)

[pō 'to go']

'you who **are going** to (go through) the forest where the sun is burning hot'

⁴ Some might take the stem to be āku 'to become.'

muṛuval iṇ nakai **kāṇkam** (narr.81:9)

[**kāṇ** 'to see']

'**Let us see** (her) sweet bright smile.'

'We shall see (her) sweet bright smile.'

ceru p pala **cey**kuvai (pati.36:14)

[**cey** 'to do, make']

'**You make** many wars.'

kaṭuñ cūḷ **tarukuval** niṇakkē (aka.110:5)

[**tar** 'to provide, give']

'**I shall give** you a serious promise.'

(Notice the enunciative **u**.)

iṇṇē **varukuvaṇ** oḷikka avaraṅku iṭamē (pura.216:12)

[**var** 'to come']

'He **will come** now. Leave a place for him.'

(Notice the enunciative **u**.)

celkuvai āyiṇ nalkuvaṇ peritu (pura.160:14)

[**cel** 'to go, leave for a destination']

'If you **will go** he will give you a great deal (of gifts).'

irantu cel māḱkaṭku iṇi iṭaṇ iṇri p parantu icai **nirka** p pāṭiṇaṇ
(pura.126:12-13)

[**niḷ** 'to stay, continue to exist']

'Without leaving an opportunity for the suppliants (to beg elsewhere),
he sang (of you) so that your fame spreads and **stays** (for ever).'

kuḷaviyoṭu pacu maral **kaṭkum** kāntaḷ vēli c ciṛukuṭi (kuṛu.100:2-3)

[**kaḷ** 'to weed, pick']

'(people of the) small residences with kāntaḷ fences where (they)
weed out wild jasmines and fresh green maral bushes'

niṇ maṇaiyōḷ **kēṭkiṇ** varuntuvaḷ peritē (aiṅk.81:4, 5)
 [kēḷ 'to hear']

'If your wife **hears** (of it) she will grieve very much.'

ūṇoli aravam tāṇum **kēṭkum** (pura.173:4)
 [kēḷ 'to be audible']

'The noise of (people getting) food is **audible**.'

ivar yār **eṇkuvaḷ** allal (narr.6:6)
 [eṇ 'to say']

'She will not **ask** "Who are these people?"'

niṇṇai vaḷipattu **irakkuvēṇ** vantaṇēṇ (kali.143:23-24)
 [ira 'to beg, request']

'I came **to** worship and **beg** of you.'

taṇ ūr k karuṅkai k kollāṇai **irakkum** tiruntilai neṭuvēḷ vaṭitticiṇ
 eṇavē (pura.180:11-13)

[ira 'to beg, request']

'He **would beg** his town's adept smith to make a long spear with a perfect leaf-like tip.'

puṇaviṇ cēval ... vēṅkai ... putu p pū p parantaṇa **naṭakka** yām
 kaṇṭaṇam (narr.384:1, 7-8)

[naṭa 'to walk']

'We (hon.) saw the male pigeon **walking** on the scattered fresh vēṅkai flowers.'

paruntu **paṇakkallā** p pārval **pācaṇai** (matu.231)
 [para 'to fly']

'**war camp** with an excellent view **where** vultures **cannot fly**'

(Note that the word **pārval** in the example is taken as **pār** 'seeing' + **val** 'capable'.)

maṛakka viṭumō niṇ māmai k kaviṇē (aīnk.470:5)

[**maṛa** ‘to forget’]

‘Will your attractive dark complexion **let/allow** (him to) **forget** (you)?’

kaliyē ciṟu veḷ uppiṇ koḷḷai cārri p perum kal nannāṭṭu umaṇ **olikkuntu** (puṛa.386:16-17)

[**oli** ‘to sound’]

‘The backwater announces the abundance of small white rock salt, whereas the salt merchants **make a noise** (about it) in the big mountain country.’

iṇitu uṭaṇ **kaḷikkil** iḷamai iṇitāl amma (aīnk.415:3-4)

[**kaḷi** ‘to pass’]

‘Youth is sweet, indeed, **if** (one) **spends** it pleasantly with (one’s companion).’

tītiṇmai teyvattāl kaṇṭi **teḷikku** (kali.91:7-8)

[**teḷi** ‘to clarify, verify, reassure’]

‘Witness the harmlessness, by god, I **reassure** you.’

niṇaikkum kālai maruṭkai uṭaitṭē (puṛa.217:1)

[**niṇai** ‘to ponder, think’]⁵

‘**Come to think** of it, it is amazing!’

añcal ōmpu niṇ aṇi nalam **nukarku** (kuṛi:181)

[**nukar** ‘to enjoy’]

⁵ Cf. **niṇaiyum** (puṛa.213:7).

‘Prevent fearing. **Let me enjoy** your beautiful loveliness.’

‘Stay away from fearing. Let me enjoy your beautiful loveliness.’

maṇaikkōḷi p paim payir iṇaṇē ... nīrkkōḷi k kūy p **peyarkkuntu**

(*pura.395:9, 11*)

[**peyar** ‘to move’]

‘The group of crying domestic fowls inviting their mates call out to the water fowls and **arouse** them.’

ñ:

ār aṇar uṇunar aru niṇam cuṭṭi k kūr eḷku **eṇiṇar** (*aka.71:11-12*)

[**eṇi** ‘to toss, throw’]

‘those who **throw** sharp spears pointing the dear chest of those who are in deep pain’

(t)t:

cāṭṭaṇ māynta piṇṇai mullaiyum **pūṭṭiyō** ollaiyūr nāṭṭē (*pura.242:5-6*)

[**pū** ‘to blossom’]

‘O jasmine, dare **you** to **bloom** in his Ollaiyūr country after Cāṭṭaṇ has died?’

O jasmine, have you dared to bloom in his Ollaiyūr country after Cāṭṭaṇ has died?’

cōṟuṭai k kaiyar vīṟu vīṟu iyaṅkum iruṅkilai c ciṟāar k **kāṇṭum**

(*pura.173:8-9*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to notice, look at’]

‘We **are looking** at the large group of young children who walk briskly with rice in their hands.’

kāṇam iṟappa **eṇṇutir** āyīn

(*aka.5:15-16*)

[**eṇṇu** < **eṇ** ‘to think, intend’]

‘if you **intend** to cross the forest’

[Notice the enunciative **u**.]

yām avaṇiṇṇum **varutum** (cīru:143)
 [var ‘to come’]

‘We **are coming** from there.’

[Notice the enunciative **u**.]

ivaḷ aṇaṅku uṇṇai **pōri** (aiṅk.58:3)
 [pōl ‘to resemble, be like’]

‘You look **as if** you are experiencing her affliction.’

kēṭṭutum pāṇi ... murukaṇ ... paraṅkuṇru (pari.8:81-82)
 [kēṭṭ causative of **kē**] ‘to hear, be audible’]⁶

‘We **make** rhythmic beats **audible** on Murukaṇ’s Paraṅkuṇru.’

[Notice the enunciative **u**.]

ūraṇ koṭumai nāṇi nallaṇ **enrum** yāmē allāṇ eṇnum eṇ taṭa meṇ tōlē
 (aiṅk.11:2-4)

[**eṇ** ‘to say, utter’]

‘Ashamed of the Ūraṇ’s cruelty, I **say**, “He is a good person.” My soft curvaceous shoulders say “He is not.” ’

pulattiyāl emmē (aka.39:25)
 [pula ‘to sulk’]

‘You **are sulking** with me.’

pulavuti mātō nīyē palarāl attai niṇ kuṇi iruntōrē (puṇa.219:3-4)
 [pula(vu) ‘to sulk, be frustrated’]

‘You **are frustrated**. There are many people who are with you (in this).’

⁶ The form **kēṭṭutum** is one of its kind. Parimēlaḷakar, the earliest commentator on this text, translates **kēṭṭutum** as ‘Let us create.’ I have taken **kēṭṭ** to be the archaic causative form of **kē**] ‘to hear; be audible.’ See “The Causative Stem” for information on deriving causative stems by stem mutation.

nām ilam ākuta**l** a**ri**tum ... cērp̄paṇoṭu nākāa ūnkē (*narr.299:6, 9*)
[a**ri** ‘to know’]

‘We **know** that we become nothing when we do not rejoice with the man from the seashore.’

avaṇ tāṇaiyiṇ ... pōṇa nilam ellām pōr ār vayal **pukuta**
(*pari.22:9, 10-11*)

[**puku** ‘to enter’]

‘like his army, as and wherever it went, the flood **entered** the fields filled with haystacks’

yāṇai ... kuḷavi ... ūr āṇ kaṇṇoṭu **pukutum** nāṭaṇ (*narr.171:1, 3, 5*)
[**puku** ‘to enter’]

‘The man from the country where elephant calves **enter** the village along with the calves of the cows.’

(Note that the non-past/non-completive marker **t** precedes the third person PNG **um**.)

aīnkūntal nal akam porunti oḷiyiṇ vaṇumai **añcuti** (*aka.123:6-7*)
[a**ñcu** ‘to fear’]

‘You **are afraid** of (the possible) poverty if you stayed (home without seeking wealth) leaning on the lovely chest of (your) woman with five-fold tresses.’

nallaṇivu uṭaiyōr nalkuravu **uḷḷutum** peruma yām (*puṇa.197:17-18*)
[uḷḷ**u** ‘to remember’]

‘We **remember** the poverty of those who are wise.’

akaṇirō em āyam viṭṭu (*poru:123*)
[aka**l** ‘to depart, go away’]

‘Do you dare to **go away** leaving our group?’

n⁷:

ceṇmō peruma em viḷavu uṭai nāṭṭu eṇa yām taṇ **ariyunam** āka
(*puṛa.381:5-6*)

[**ari** ‘to know’]

‘As we **informed** him “We shall now go to our festive country”, ...’
As we said to him “We shall now go to our festive country” and
waited **to know** of his response, ...’

kāṇunar vayāam kaṭku iṇ cēyārriṇ (*malai:476*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to look at, view’]

‘long river, pleasing to the eye, and which is sought by those who
look at it ...’

[Notice the enunciative **u**.]

ariyal ārkai vaṇ kai **viṇainar** (*pati.62:16*)

[**viṇai** ‘work, task’]

‘**work men**, with strong hands, who drink toddy’

toṛutta vayal āral **piṛaḷnavum** ēṇu poruta ceṇu uḷātu **vittunavum**
(*pati.13:1-2*)

[**piṛaḷ** ‘to wallow’; **vittu** ‘to sow’]

‘manured fields in which the āral fish **wallow**; and muddy lands
where bulls fought and seeds **are sown** without ploughing’

⁷ Some might consider this **n** to be a “hiatus-filler” (cf. Zvelebil 1967:31). It occurs in the slot (following the stem and preceding the PNG) where a past/completive marker would occur. Therefore, I am reluctant to treat it as a hiatus-filler in verb forms. Also see P.S. Subrahmanyam (1971:248-249) who considers this **n** as one of the “present-future suffixes” occurring in participial nouns.

(p)p:

uṇṇatu nāli uṭuppavai iraṇṭē (pura.189:5)

[uṇ ‘to eat, consume’; nāli a measure]

‘(The amount of) what one **eats** is (equal to) a nāli; (The number of) what one wears is (equal to) only two (pieces of clothing).’

pal yāṇai kāṇpal (pati.77:11-12)

[kāṇ ‘to see’]

‘I **see** many elephants.’

niṇṇu kāṇpaṇṇa niḷ malai (pura.211:3)

[kāṇ ‘to see, look at’]

‘tall mountain which stands **as if** it is **looking** at (the world)’

(An instance of non-past/non-completive stem **kāṇp** + **anna**.)

yāṇ ākiyar niṇ neṇcu nērpavaḷē (kuru.49:5)

[nēr ‘to be fit for’]

‘May I be the one who will **be fit** for your heart.’

neṭuntēr pāṇi nīrpa (aka.50:4)

[niḷ ‘to stay, wait’]

‘**as** the tall chariot **waits** around’

kuṇṇu nekiḷppaṇṇa kuḷir koḷ vātai (aka.163:9)

[nekiḷ ‘to loosen’]

‘cold (wind) which blows **as if** it is **loosening** the hill’

(An instance of non-past/non-completive stem **nekiḷpp** + **anna**.)

nāṭaṇ kēṭpiṇ (aka.98:29)

[kēḷ ‘to hear’]

‘**if** the Nāṭaṇ **hears** about it ...’

em kēḷvar k kāṇīrō **en**pavaḷ (kali.145:61)

[**en** 'to say']

'she who **asks** "Have you seen my companion?" '

kāmaṇ kaṇai **irappēṇ** (kali.147:59-60)

[**ira** 'to beg/request']

'I would **beg for** Kāmaṇ's arrows.'

piṛaṇ kaṭai **marappa** nalkuvaṇ celiṇē (puṛa.68:19)

[**mara** 'to forget']

'If you go, he will give **so that you will forget** about (going to) the doors of others.'

uḷaiyiṇ pōkātu **aḷippinūm** ... kāmam kol ivaḷ kaṇ pacantatu (narr.35:9, 13)

[**aḷi** 'to be compassionate']

'Is it (due to) passion that her eyes turned pale, **although I was compassionate** without going away from her side?'

val viṇai vayakkutal valittimaṇ **valippaḷavai** (kali.17:6)

[**vali** 'to dare']

'You dare to brighten up (the conquered places) by hard work;
While you dare ...'

(An instance of non-past stem **valipp** + postposition **aḷavai**.)

ūraṇoṭu **iruppiṇ** iru maruṇkiṇamē (kuru.370:2-3)

[**iru** 'to sit, remain']

'If I am **sitting** with the Ūraṇ, we are two bodies.'

pakal āṇṭu alkiṇai paratta eṇṇu yāṇ ikali **iruppēṇ** āyiṇ (kali.75:22-23)

[**iru** 'to remain in a certain state, continue']

'If I **continue** to be hostile saying "O you who go after other women, you stayed over there during midday", ... '

paṇi uraikkum kaṇṇoṭu **inaip**āṅku inṇātu uraivi (aka.164:9)

[**inai** 'to grieve over a thought']

'she who is **thinking** (about several things) and stays miserably with tearful eyes'

(An instance of non-past/non-completive stem **inaip** + particle **āṅku**.)

eyyāy āyiṇum **uraippal** tōḷi (aka.28:2)

[**urai** 'to tell']

'Although you will not understand, I shall **tell** you, my friend.'

puraivatu **ninaippin** puraivatō iṇṇē (pati.17:1)

[**ninai** 'to think']

'If one **would think** of what measures up to you, there is nothing that measures up to you.'

(u)m:

yāṇē aṇṇiyum uḷar kol ... nōkku arum ciṇu neṇi **ninaiyumōrē**

(narr.104:8, 12)

[**ninai** 'to think']

'Are there any besides me, **who would think of** the small path (through which my lover will come) that is difficult to be seen?'

vil uḷutu **uṇmār** nāppaṇ (pura.170:4)

[**uṇ** 'to eat, consume']

'in the midst of those who **eat / make a living** by their bows'

uṇmarum tinmarum (pati.24:18)

[**uṇ** 'to drink, eat'; **tin** 'to eat, munch']

'those who **drink** and those who **eat**'

kālai āvatu aṇṇiyār mālai **enmanār** mayāṅkiyōrē (kali.119:15-16)

[**en** 'to say']

‘Those who **say** that it is evening, not knowing that it is morning, are confused.’

‘Those who are confused **say** that it is evening, not knowing that it is morning.’

v:

ciṛu puṇ mālai uṇmai aṛivēṇ tōḷi avar k kāṇā ūṅkē (*kuṛu.352:5-6*)
[aṛi ‘to know’]

‘When I do not see him, I **realize** the existence of the mean little evening.’

poruḷē ... oṭu mīṇ vaḷiyiṇ keṭuva (*narr.16:3, 6*)
[keṭu ‘to perish’]

‘Wealth **disappears** like the path (in water created by) the moving fish.’

iṇpuṛa viṭuti āyiṇ ciṛitu kuṇṛiyum koḷval ... atarpaṭa aruḷal vēṇṭuval
(*pura.159:24-26*)

[‘vēṇṭu ‘to wish for’]

‘If you would let me go, I would accept even a small quantity of black-eyed red beans. I **wish for** such kindness.’

vaṇṇamum vaṇappum variyum vāṭa varuntuval ivaḷ (*aka.119:2-3*)
[varuntu ‘to grieve’]

‘She is **grieving** as her complexion, beauty, and shape are withering.’

koṇ oṇṛu kūruvaṇ (*narr.233:5-6*)
[kūru ‘to state’]

‘I **shall state** something for no real reason.’

nīḷiṭai maṭattakai meliya c cāay naṭakkum kol eṇa nōval yāṇē
(*aka.219:16-18*)

[nō < no ‘to suffer internally’]

‘I **suffer** thinking whether (my girl) will (be able to) walk in the long path, being weary and her innocent nature losing (its) strength.’

poyyā eḷili **peyv**iṭam nōkki (pura.173:5)

[**peyv** ‘to pour’]

‘looking for a place where the non-failing cloud **would pour** down’

(An instance of non-past/non-completive stem **peyv** + noun **iṭam** ‘place/time’)

varuvaṇ eṇṇa kōṇatu perumai (pura.217:7)

[**var** ‘to come’]

‘the greatness of the king who said, “He (the friend) **will come**” ’

[Notice the enunciative **u**.]

kaṭiyuṭai viyal nakar **celvuḷi** c **celvuḷi** (aka.49:14-15)

[**cel** ‘to go’]

‘as she **goes** and **goes** around (her father’s) vast protected house’

(An instance of non-past/non-completive stem **celv** + postposition **uḷi**.)

celvai āyiṇ cēṇōṇ allāṇ (pura.103:5)

[**cel** to go’]

‘If you **would go**, he would not be distant.’

pakaiyaṟu paya viṇai muyaṟi maṇ **muyal**valavai (kali.17:14)

[**muyal** ‘to undertake’]

‘You are undertaking a fruitful action that knows no enmity; while you **undertake** it ...’

(An instance of non-past/non-completive stem **muyalv** + postposition **aḷavai**.)

yāṅku aṛintaṇar ... tōḷi ... pirintu cēṇ uṛaital valluvōrē
(*kuṛu.154:1, 8*)

[**val** ‘to be capable’]

‘How did he know/learn to be **someone capable** of living far away, being separated from me?’

iṇṇum vāḷval eṇ itaṇ paṇṇē
(*puṛa.245:7*)

[**vāḷ** ‘to live’]

‘I still **live**. What is its nature?’

Formation mechanism: periphrasis

bare stem + (k)kil

verbal participle in ā + **iru/kiṭa/nil**

infinitive in ūu + **nil**

Structure and Example

(bare stem + (k)kil)

paḷaṇ kēṇmai kaṇṭariyātēṇ pōḷ **karakkirpeṇ** maṇ kolō (*kali.39:39-40*)

[**kara** ‘to hide, conceal’]

‘Would I **be able to conceal** (the truth) as if I did not know of your old/past friendship?’

varuvīr ākutaḷ uraimiṇ ... kāṇam ceṇṇōrmaṇ eṇa **irukkirpōrkkē**
(*aka.387:3, 19-20*)

[**iru** ‘to remain, stay’]

‘O tell that you will return to them who **could remain** thinking, “Alas! He has left for the forest.” ’

tīramum vaiyaiyum **cērkiṇṇa** kaṇ kaviṇ
(*pari.22:35*)

[**cēr** ‘to join’]

‘the fascinating beauty (that emerges **where/when**) the bank and
(the river) Vaiyai **join**’

putu nār̥ram **ceykinrē** cem pūm puṇal (pari.7:21-22)
[cey ‘to do, make’]

‘The red water filled with flowers is **creating** new fragrance.’

vatuvaīyul paṇṭu aṛiyātīr pōl **paṭarkirpīr** maṇ kolō (kali.39.37:38)
[paṭar ‘to move about, behave’]

‘Will you **go around / conduct yourselves** at the wedding as if you
did not know each other before?’

(adverbial participle in ā + iru)

pirintu uṛal **aṛiyā iruntu** kavavi (aink.419:2)
[aṛi ‘to know’]
‘hugging **without knowing** separation’

(infinitive in ā + kkiṭa)

māl yāl **kēlā** k kiṭantāṇ pōl perum kaṭal tuyil koḷḷum ... kāṇal⁸
(kali.123:4-5)

‘sea-shore where the big ocean sleeps like Tirumāl (Vishnu) who is
lying still (in slumber) **while listening** to the music of the harp’

(infinitive in ā + nil)

cura naṇi **vārā ninraṇal** (aink.397:3)
[vār < var ‘to come’]

⁸ Compare kuruku irai **tēra** k **kiṭakkum** ... iṇ iḷa vēṇil ... vaiyai ‘(The river) Vaiyai lies
still in the spring while the herons look for their prey (in the water)’ (pari.6:76-77).

‘She is **staying** in the forest **while coming**’
 ‘She is **coming** through the forest.’⁹

(infinitive in **ūu + nil**)

paṇi aṭūu ninra pāṇāl kaṅkul (aka.125:11)
 [aṭu ‘to kill, conquer’]
 ‘middle of the night when the cold is **killing**’

⁹ This is the traditional interpretation. But compare vāy vālā ninrāl tikaittu (*pari.20:46*) which means ‘stunned, she **stood without being able** to speak’, which describes a motionless state and so gives a negative meaning. See “A Note on the Verb ā” for a discussion of ā.

SECTION 4

PAST PERSONAL VERBS

GENERAL: Finite verbs tell us: (a) what action was or will be done, (b) who did or will do the action, and/or (c) the state of the action, completive or non-completive. These verb forms are here called “personal verbs” because they contain information, in the form of a PNG suffix, about the doer of the action.¹ The past personal verbs tell us that the action or state indicated by the verb has a completive aspect.

FORMATION: The past personal verbs are formed by suffixation. In most cases, a suffix indicating the person-number-gender of the doer of the action is added directly to the past/completive stem of the verb. In some cases, **an**, **in**, or **icin** follows the stem and precedes the PNG.²

¹ The traditional term for “finite verbs” is **vinaimurru** ‘action-completeness.’

² In some contexts, the affixes **an** and **in** seem to mark a “present perfect” action, but in most cases do not. Therefore, they could be considered as **cāriyai** “inflectional increments” after the traditional grammarians. For more on **an** and **in**, see “The Past Stem,” “Notes on Miscellaneous Items,” P.S. Subrahmanyam (1971:108), and Zvelebil (1967:32).

The affix **icin** is taken by modern scholars as containing traces of *c as a past

See “The Past Stem” and “Person-Number-Gender” for information on the past stem and the PNG categories.

PNG for past affirmative personal verbs

1st person singular: **an**, **en**, **ēn**, **icin**

1st person plural, honorific: **am**, **ām**, **ikum**, **em**, **ēm**

2nd person singular: **atai**, **avai**, **āy**, **icin**, **ai**, **ōy**

2nd person plural, honorific: **ir**, **īr**

3rd person masculine singular: **an**, **ān**, **ōn**

3rd person feminine singular: **aḷ**, **āḷ**, **ōḷ**

3rd person human plural, honorific: **ar**, **ār**, **ōr**

3rd person neuter singular: **atu**, **atai**, **icin**, **tu**

3rd person neuter plural: **a**

marker (cf. P.S. Subrahmanyam, 1971:221-224). T.P. Meenakshisundaran (1965:85) says that “it is difficult to say what was the original grammatical significance of this **icin**.”

In classical Tamil, **icin** occurs in the first person, second person, and third person verb forms denoting “past/completive” and “non-past/non-completive” actions. It follows the past stem when the completive aspect is indicated, and the bare verb stem otherwise. In most cases, it serves as a PNG suffix, and very rarely precedes the PNG suffix or the particle **āṅku**: *iru nilam miḷirnticināṅku* ‘as if the vast earth was stirred up’ (*pura.139:13*). Note that in this context, it functions in a way similar to the PNG suffix **atu**. Therefore, this study treats **icin** as a PNG suffix. This treatment will not harm the reader’s understanding of classical Tamil poetry. See also “Notes on Miscellaneous Items.”

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: past stem ± **an/icin/in** + PNG. When the affix **icin** follows the past stem, the PNG begins with the vowel **ō**. When **icin** serves as the PNG, it is added directly to the past stem.³

³ In the examples here and elsewhere where similar examples are given, I have treated the stem form which precedes the affix **in** as the past stem ending with **i** or **y** (e.g., **vēṇṭinam** < **vēṇṭi** + **in** + **am**; **tāyina** < **tāy** + **in** + **a**). Some might prefer to derive such forms from a root to which **in** is added as the past tense marker (e.g., **vēṇṭu** + **in** + **am**; cf. Hart & Hart 1979:118) or from a past stem ending with **i**, followed by a hiatus-filler **n**, as for example, **vēṇṭi** past stem + **n** hiatus filler + **am** PNG (cf. Zvelebil 1967:100, note 70).

I have treated the **in** occurring in these contexts as an affix (“inflectional increment”) intervening between the past stem (**vēṇṭi**) and the PNG suffix (**am**) because it occurs in the same place as the affix **an**, which occurs after certain other kinds of past/completive stems (e.g., **kaṭintanam** ‘we avoided’ < **kaṭint** past/completive stem + **an** + **am** PNG). This way, we can have a neat pattern of describing the past personal verb: past stem + **an/in** + PNG.

Also I find that certain classical Tamil forms have retained both the past marker **i** and the affix **in**: **kavaiyinaḷ** ‘she embraced’ < **kavai** ‘to split up like a fork; hug; embrace’ + **i** past/completive marker + **y** glide + **in** + **aḷ** PNG (*kuṟu.359:6*; *aiṅk.409:2*); **taḷiiyinan** ‘he hugged’ < **taḷu** ‘to hug’ + **i** past/completive marker + **y** glide + **in** + **an** PNG (*kuṟu.359:5*). Compare **kavai** *nā* ‘split tongue’ (*puṟa.382:13*) to get the meaning of **kavai**. In these examples, **kavaiyinaḷ** and **taḷiiyinan**, even the meter of the poems does not come into play in retaining both **i** and **in**. Therefore, I took **i** as the past marker and **in** as the affix following it.

Some classical Tamil forms encouraged me to treat the **y** as the past marker, not as a glide, in contexts when it precedes the affix **in**: **pāyinru** ‘it spread’ < **pā** ‘to spread’ + **y** past/completive marker + **in** + **tu** PNG (*aka.312:14*) *vs.* **pāvinru** ‘there is / will be no spreading (of lovesick pallor)’ < **pā** ‘spreading’ + **v** glide + **inru** ‘there is not’ (*aka.172:18*). The former of these two forms certainly contains **y**, the past marker, whereas the latter does not. One cannot treat the **y** here as a glide, because the glide **y** never occurs between the past marker and the root/stem, if one were to treat the **i** as the past marker occurring after **y**. Some may consider the stem here to be **pāy** instead of **pā** (cf. Zvelebil 1967:28; 2.5.1 where he considers **pāay** in *naṟṟ.347:2* as the verb stem). But then, the form **pāvinru** ‘there is / will be no spreading (of lovesick pallor)’ would not yield the stem **pāy**, nor can

PNG *Structure and Example*

a: (3rd person neuter plural)

(past stem + a)

in̄iya ceytu nin̄ru pin̄ **mun̄ivu ceyta** ivaḷ taṭa meṇ̄ tōḷē (*aink.143:2-3*)

[**cey** ‘to do’; **ceyta** < **ceyt** + **a**; **mun̄ivu** ‘frustration’;

mun̄ivu cey ‘to frustrate’]

‘Her curvaceous soft shoulders did sweet things first and remained (that way), and then **frustrated** me.’

(past stem + glide + a)

tol nilai **val̄iia** nin̄ toṭi

(*narr.332:3-4*)

[**val̄u** ‘to slip’; **val̄iia** < **val̄i** + **y** + **a**]

‘Your bracelets **slipped** from their original place.’

eṇ̄ ... mun̄kai **n̄n̄kiya** vaḷaiyē

(*aink.163:3-4*)

[**n̄n̄ku** ‘to depart’; **n̄n̄kiya** < **n̄n̄ki** + **y** + **a**]

‘The bracelets **left** my forearm (wrist).’

one derive **pāvin̄ru** from **pāy** + **in̄ru**. Taking these facts into consideration, I took the **y** as the past/completive marker in contexts like **pāyin̄ru** and **tāyina** (given below in the examples). The **y** occurs as past/completive marker in stems which have open syllables and end with a long vowel or a short vowel other than **u**.

Similarly, consider **ninaiyin̄ai** ‘you have been thinking’ (*aka.379:5*) *vs.* **ninaivin̄ai** ‘you, having the thought’ (*aka.39:18*). The form **ninaiyin̄ai** certainly exhibits **y** as its past/completive marker while **ninaivin̄ai** is derived from **ninaivu** ‘memory, thought’ + **in̄** + **ai** PNG.

See “The Past Stem” for specific examples manifesting **y** as the past/completive marker.

(past stem + **an** + a)

kaḷavum **puḷittana** (aka.394:1)

[**puḷi** ‘to turn sour’; **puḷittana** < **puḷitt** + **an** + a]

‘The kaḷa fruits also have **turned sour**.’

(past stem + **in** + a)

viḷavum **paḷunina** (aka.394:1)

[**paḷun** ‘to mature, ripen’; **paḷunina** < **paḷuni** + **in** + a]

‘The viḷa fruits **are mature** too.’

āṟu vaṇappu eyta alar **tāyina** (aink.483:1)

[**tā** ‘to spread’; **tāyina** < **tāy** + **in** + a]

‘The flowers **spread** and (so) the path attained beauty.’

atu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(past stem + **atu**)

neñcam ... taḷar aṭi tāṅkiya **cenratu inrē** (aka.128:6, 15)

[**cel** ‘to leave for a destination’; **cenratu** < **cenr** + **atu**]

‘My heart **left** today in order to hold (his) staggering feet’ (on the mountain path).’

atai: It may be understood as consisting of two suffixes **atu** and **ai**.

(2nd person singular)

(past stem + **atai**)

nī kaḷariya **vantatai** (kali.76:13)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vantatai** < **vant** + **atai**]

‘You **arrived** disputing (me).’

(The form **vantatai** is similar to **vantanai** ‘you came’ (kuru.355:5), and therefore one may be tempted to analyze it as **vant** + **at** + **ai**.)

But no satisfactory identification of **at** as an affix could be made, unless it is a scribal error misrepresenting **an**)

(3rd person neuter singular)

(past stem + **atai**)

puṇai puṇai ēra t **tālttatai** (*pari.6:68*)

[**tāl** ‘to delay’; **tālttatai** < **tāltt** + **atai**]

‘There was a delay to get on the decorated raft.’

(There would be no problem analyzing this form as **tāltt** + **atu** + **ai**.)

am: (1st person honorific/plural)

(past stem + **an** + **am**)

kaṭintanam celavē (*aka.5:26*)

[**kaṭi** ‘to avoid’; **kaṭintanam** < **kaṭint** + **an** + **am**]

‘We avoided the departure.’

nannar naṇmoḷi **kēṭṭanam** (*mull:17*)

[**kē** ‘to hear; be audible’; **kēṭṭanam** < **kēṭṭ** + **an** + **am**]

‘We heard lovely good words.’

(past stem + **in** + **am**)

muyaṅkal yām **vēṇṭinamē** (*aka.26:15*)

[**vēṇṭu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭinam** < **vēṇṭi** + **in** + **am**]

‘We wished for (his) embracing.’

ar: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(past stem + **an** + **ar**)

piriyalam eṇra col tām **maṇantanar** kollō (*aka.1:6-7*)

[**maṛa** ‘to forget’; **maṛantaṇar** < **maṛant** + **an** + **ar**]

‘Did he forget, I wonder, the word (he gave me) that we will not be separated?’

māl varai **varaintaṇar** emarē

(*puṛa.151:12*)

[**varai** ‘to delimit, choose, select’;

varaintaṇar < **varaint** + **an** + **ar**]

‘Our kin **selected** the dark mountain.’

kaṇicci pōl kōṭu cī ēṛu toḷūu p **pukuttaṇar**

(*kali.101:8-9*)

[**pukuttu** ‘to make enter’; **pukuttaṇar** < **pukutt** + **an** + **ar**]

‘They sharpened the horns of the bull (to the form of) a trident and **made** them **enter** the stall.’

(past stem + **in** + **ar**)

tiruntu vēl nākaṇ **kūriṇar** palārē

(*puṛa.179:12*)

[**kūru** ‘to state, talk about’; **kūriṇar** < **kūri** + **in** + **ar**]

‘Many people **mentioned** Nākaṇ, with a perfect spear.’

avai: (2nd person singular)

(past stem + **in** + **avai**)

calampuri taṇṭu **ēntiṇavai**

(*pari.15:58*)

[**ēntu** ‘to hold upward’; **ēntiṇavai** < **ēnti** + **in** + **avai**]

‘You **carried** a club (that would perform acts) of fury.’

aḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(past stem + **aḷ**)

avaṇai āku eṇa **ēyaḷ** maṇ yāyum

(*naṛṛ.134:5-6*)

[ē ‘to command, order’; ēya| < ēy + a|]
 ‘Mother also **commanded** “Be there.”’

(past stem + **an** + a|)

oṇṭoṭi arivai **koṇṭana|** neñcē (aṅk.172:1)
 [ko| ‘to take hold’; **koṇṭana|** < koṇṭ + **an** + a|]
 ‘The young woman with bright bracelets **took hold of** my heart.’

(past stem + **in** + a|)

iva|ē ... āṇātu a|a| **toṭaṅkina|ē** (aka.120:6, 8-9)
 [toṭaṅku ‘to begin a process’; **toṭaṅkina|** < toṭaṅki + **in** + a|]
 ‘She **started** crying relentlessly.’

pal viyar am tukil talaiyil **tuṭaiyina|** (narr.120:7-8)
 [tuṭai ‘to wipe’; **tuṭaiyina|** < tuṭai + **in** + a|]
 ‘She **wiped** her sweat with the end of her fine clothing.’

(past stem + glide + **in** + a|)

viṛalavaṇ putalvaṇ tāy avaṇ puṛam **kavaiiyina|ē** (kuru.359:5-6)
 [kavai ‘to embrace’; **kavaiiyina|** < kavai + glide y + **in** + a|]
 ‘The mother of the child of the triumphant one **hugged** his back.’

paṇṭum iṇaiyaiyō eṇa **viṇavina|** yāyē (narr.55:6-7)
 [viṇa ‘to enquire’; **viṇavina|** < viṇa + glide v + **in** + a|]
 ‘“Were you like this in the past too?” **enquired** my mother.’

an: (1st person singular)

(past stem + **an** + **an**)

yāṇ **kaṇṭanan** (puṛa.85:8)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kaṇṭaṇaṇ** < **kaṇṭ** + **an** + **an**]
 ‘I saw.’

(past stem + **in** + **an**)

yāṇ **toṭaṇkiṇaṇ** (*aiṅk.428:4*)
 [**toṭaṇku** ‘to begin a process’; **toṭaṇkiṇaṇ** < **toṭaṇki** + **in** + **an**]
 ‘I began’

(3rd person masculine singular)

(past stem + **an** + **an**)

āṅku c ceypa ellām **ceytaṇaṇ** (*pura.239:18-19*)
 [**cey** ‘to do’; **ceytaṇaṇ** < **ceyt** + **an** + **an**]
 ‘Thus, **he did** all that had to be done.’

pāṇ uvappa p paci **tīrttaṇaṇ** (*pura.239:17*)
 [**tīr** ‘to vanish; to remove, cure’; **tīrttaṇaṇ** < **tīrtt** + **an** + **an**]
 ‘**He removed/cured** the bards’ hunger as they were delighted.’

uyarntōr ulakattu p **peyarntaṇaṇ** (*pura.174:20*)
 [**peyar** ‘to move’; **peyarntaṇaṇ** < **peyarnt** + **an** + **an**]
 ‘**He moved** toward the world of the nobles.’
 ‘He proceeded toward the world of the nobles.’

(past stem + **in** + **an**)

varu paṭai etir **tāṇkiṇaṇ** (*pura.239:11*)
 [**tāṇku** ‘to bear, hold back’; **tāṇkiṇaṇ** < **tāṇki** + **in** + **an**]
 ‘**He held** the upcoming army.’

(past stem + glide + **in** + **an**)

putalvaṇ **taḷiiyaṇ**

(*kuṛu.359:5*)

[**taḷu** ‘to hug’; **taḷiiyaṇ** < **taḷi** + **y** + **in** + **an**]

‘He hugged his son.’

ām: (1st person plural/honorific)

(past stem + **ām**)

karantatūum kaiyoṭu **kōṭpaṭṭām**

(*kali.115:3*)

[**kōṭpaṭṭām** < **kōṭpaṭṭ** + **ām**;

kōṭpaṭṭ past stem < **kōlpaṭu** ‘to fall within one’s hold, be caught’
< **kōl** + **paṭu**]

‘We were caught with what we concealed.’

‘We were caught red-handed.’

āy: (2nd person singular)

(past stem + **āy**)

niṇ pākaṇum **nīṭṭittāy** eṇṇu kaṭāam kaṭum tiṇ tēr (*kali.66:23-24*)

[**nīṭṭi** ‘to extend, delay’; **nīṭṭittāy** < **nīṭṭitt** + **āy**]

‘Your charioteer also would hasten your strong chariot because **you** delayed.’

(It is quite conceivable that **nīṭṭi** is itself a past/completive form [adverbial participle] < **nīṭṭu** ‘to extend’ + **i**, serving as a base for adding further suffixes.)

(past stem + **in** + **āy**)

ai vakai **pārāṭṭināy**

(*kali.22:13*)

[**pārāṭṭu** ‘to praise, appreciate’; **pārāṭṭināy** < **pārāṭṭi** + **in** + **āy**]

‘You praised (my) five-part (tresses).’

ār: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(past stem + **ār**)

terumantu **cāyttār** talai (kali.39:25)

[**cāy** 'to stoop, bend down, bow'; **cāyttār** < **cāytt** + **ār**]

'My relatives were baffled and **bowed** their heads.'

(past stem + **in** + **ār**)

cila makaḷir marṛu atarku **ūṭinār** vaiyai akattu (pari.20:66-67)

[**ūṭu** 'to sulk, chide'; **ūṭinār** < **ūṭi** + **in** + **ār**]

'A few women responded to that and **chided** (her) at (the river) Vaiyai.'

āl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(past stem + **āl**)

eṇ aiyaṛkku uyttu **uraittāl** yāy (kali.39:21)

[**urai** 'to inform, tell'; **uraittāl** < **uraitt** + **āl**]

'My mother **told** my chief men (i.e., brother and father) persuasively.'

'My mother persuaded my chief men (i.e., brother and father).'

(past stem + **in** + **āl**)

puṛaṅkaṭai p **pōyināl** (kali.115:12)

[**pō** 'to go'; **pōyināl** < **pōy** + **in** + **āl**]

'She **went** to the back yard.'

ān: (3rd person masculine singular)

(past stem + **ān**)

aṇṇai ṓmpiya āynalam eṇ ai **koṇṭān** (kuru.223:6-7)

[**ko** 'to take hold'; **koṇṭān** < **koṇṭ** + **ān**]

‘My man/lover **took** (possession of my) fine loveliness which my mother had shielded/protected.’

(past stem + **in** + **ān**)

uṇṇu nīr **vikkinān**

(*kali.51:13*)

[**vikku** ‘to hiccup’; **vikkinān** < **vikki** + **in** + **ān**]

‘He **hiccoughed** for drinking water.’

ikum: (1st person plural/honorific)

(past stem + **ikum**)

nin ... taṭakkai irappōrkku k kavital allatai iraiiya malarpu aṟiyā
eṇak **kēṭṭikum** (*pati.52:10-12*)

[**kēl** ‘to hear’; **kēṭṭikum** < **kēṭṭ** + **ikum**]

‘We **heard** that except for bending/closing down (while giving) for the suppliants, your strong hands do not know to open up for begging.’

icin:

(1st person singular)

(past stem + **icin**)

aruvi cūṭiya uyar varaikku ūṇkaṇṇaḥtu em ūr eṇa āṇku atai aṟivuṟal
maṟanticin yāṇē (*aka.38:16-18*)

[**maṟa** ‘to forget’; **maṟanticin** < **maṟant** + **icin**]

‘I **forgot** to let (him) know that our town is beyond the tall mountain which has a waterfall on its top.’

(2nd person singular)

(past stem + **icin**)

paṇmāṇ uraittal **ānricin** nīyē

(*narr.332:4-5*)

[**ān** ‘to be content with’; **ānricin** < **ānr** + **icin**]

‘**Stop** saying that many times.’
 ‘Stop saying that again and again.’

(3rd person neuter singular)

(past stem + **icin**)

kāṇam tiṇṇiya malai **pōnricinē** (narr.240:10)
 [pōl ‘to resemble, be similar’; **pōnricin** < **pōnr** + **icin**]
 ‘The jungle **is like** a dense mountain.’

ir: (2nd person plural/honorific)

(past stem + **ir**)

innum tam eṇa emmaṇōr irappin munnum **koṇṭir** eṇa nummaṇōr
 maṇuttal inṇātu (pura.203:4-6)
 [koḷ ‘to receive’; **koṇṭir** < **koṇṭ** + **ir**]
 ‘When people like us beg you to give more, it is cruel to refuse
 saying “**You received** (gifts) previously too.” ’

(past stem + **an** + **ir**)

nallōrkku **ottanir** nīyir (aka.26:19)
 [o ‘to be equal to, be fit for, agreeable’; **ottanir** < **ott** + **an** + **ir**]
 ‘**You are agreeable** to lovely women.’

(past stem + **in** + **ir**)

āritai ... poruḷ taral vēṭkaiyiṇ **uḷḷinir** eṇṇpatu aṇṇṇaṇaḷ eṇ tōḷi (kali.4:6-8)
 [uḷḷu ‘to think of, consider’; **uḷḷinir** < **uḷḷi** + **in** + **ir**]
 ‘My (female) companion understood that **you thought of** (going
 through) the difficult path because of your desire to bring wealth.’

īr: (2nd person plural)

(past stem + **īr**)

ellīrum eṇ **ceytīr**

(*kali.142:15*)

[cey ‘to do’; **ceytīr** < **ceyt** + **īr**]

‘What **did** you all **do**?’

em: (1st person honorific/plural)

(past stem + **aṇ** + **em**)

ūraṇ kēṇmai ceytu **inpurranem**

(*kuru.61:5-6*)

[**inpuṛu** ‘to attain pleasure’ < **inpu** + **uṛu**;

inpurranem < **inpur** + **aṇ** + **em**]

‘We were **delighted** making friendship with the Ūraṇ.’

(past stem + **iṇ** + **em**)

kāvinem kalaṇē **curukkinem** kalappai

(*puṛa.206:10*)

[kā ‘to lift by hanging’; **curukku** ‘to draw tight’;

kāvinem < **kāvi** + **iṇ** + **em**;

curukkinem < **curukki** + **iṇ** + **em**]

‘We have **lifted** our pots; we have **tied up** our bags of musical instruments.’

eṇ: (1st person singular)

(past stem + **eṇ**)

toṭutten makīṇa cellal

(*aka.396:1*)

[toṭu ‘to grab, get hold of, to hook’; **toṭutten** < **toṭutt** + **eṇ**]

‘I got **hold** of you, Makīṇa, do not leave.’

(past stem + **an** + **en**)

yāṇar naṇ maṇai k kūṭṭu mutal **ninraṇen** (pura.376:6)

[**ni**l ‘to stand’; **ninraṇen** < **ninr** + **an** + **en**]

‘I stood in front of the barn in the good bounteous house.’

niṇ nayantu **vantaṇen** (pati.55:2)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vantaṇen** < **vant** + **an** + **en**]

‘I have came (with a) liking (for) you.’

(past stem + **in** + **en**)

avar nāṭṭu k kuṇṇam **nōkkinen** tōḷi (kuru.249:3-4)

[**nōkku** ‘to look at’; **nōkkinen** < **nōkki** + **in** + **en**]

‘My friend, I looked at the hill in his country.’

ēm: (1st person plural/honorific)

(past stem + **ēm**)

ūraṇ kēṇmai vaḷi vaḷi c ciṇakka eṇa **vēṭṭēmē** (aink.2:5-6)

[**vē**l ‘to wish for’; **vēṭṭēm** < **vēṭṭ** + **ēm**]

‘We wished/prayed that our friendship with the Ūraṇ thrives for ever and ever.’

(past stem + **in** + **ēm**)

onrinēm yām (kali.86:15)

[**onru** ‘to unite’; **onrinēm** < **onri** + **in** + **ēm**]

‘We are united.’

ēn: (1st person singular)

(past stem + **ēn**)

maṭavaral tāyar enṇūm peyarē vallāru **eṭuttēn** maṇṇa yāṇē koṭuttōr
maṇṇa aval āyattōrē (aiṅk.380:2-5)

[**eṭu** ‘to take, acquire’; **peyar eṭu** ‘to gain/raise a reputation’; **eṭuttēn**
< **eṭutt** + **ēn**]

‘Alas! By hard means, **I** only **got** the reputation that **I** am the innocent girl’s mother, while her group of friends (had the privilege of) giving her away (in marriage to her lover).’

niṇ perum peyar ētti **vantēn** peruma (peru:460-461)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vantēn** < **vant** + **ēn**]

‘Lord, **I came** praising your great name.’

(past stem + glide + **ēn**)

neṭuṅkaṭai t **tōnriyēnē** (pura.397:11)

[**tōnru** ‘to appear, show up’; **tōnriyēn** < **tōnri** + glide **y** + **ēn**]

‘**I appeared** at the tall door.’

(past stem + **an** + **ēn**)

niṇṇai t **takaittanēn** (kali.108:20)

[**takai** ‘to stop’; **takaittanēn** < **takaitt** + **an** + **ēn**]

‘**I am stopping** you.’

‘**I have stopped** you.’

(past stem + **in** + **ēn**)

matiyam nōkki niṇṇu niṇaintu **uḷḷinēn** allāṇō yāṇē (narr.62:4, 5)

[**uḷḷu** ‘to remember’; **uḷḷinēn** < **uḷḷi** + **in** + **ēn**]

‘Looking at the moon, **did I** not stop, think, and **remember** that ...?’

ai: (2nd person singular)

(past stem + **an** + **ai**)

ātal niṇ akattu aṭakki c cātal niṇka emakku **ittanaiyē** (*puṛa.91:10-11*)

[ī ‘to give, bestow’; **ittanai** < **itt** + **an** + **ai**; ā ‘to be’;

cā ‘to become weary’]

‘You concealed the (fact of) thriving within yourself and gave (the fruit) to me so my weariness would leave.’

(past stem + **in** + **ai**)

eṇava kēlāy **ninaiyinai** nī naṇi (*narr.253:4*)

[**ninai** ‘to ponder/think’; **ninaiyinai** < **ninaiy** + **in** + **ai**]

‘You thought too much without listening to (words of) mine.’

ōy: (2nd person singular)

(past stem + **ōy**)

iraviṇ **vantōy** (*aka.80:2, 3*)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vantōy** < **vant** + **ōy**]

‘You came at night.’

(past stem + glide + **ōy**)

mā vicumpu oluku puṇal vaṇaḷa aṇṇa c cēvalāy c ciṛakar p **pularttiyōy**

(*pari.3:25-26*)

[**pularttu** ‘to make dry’; **pularttiyōy** < **pulartti** + **y** + **ōy**]

‘You, in the form of a gander, dried up the rain water flowing in the vast skies with your wings.’

ōr: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(past stem + **ōr**)

iḷa nāl amaiyam **ceytōr** maṇṇa kuṇi (*aka.25:12-13*)

[**cey** ‘to do’; **ceytōr** < **ceyt** + **ōr**]

‘**H**e clearly **set** the time of young/early spring for his return.’

tāyar ennum peyarē vallāru eṭuttēṇ maṇṇa yāṇē **koṭuttōr** maṇṇa
avaḷ āyattōrē (aink.380:3-5)

[**koṭu** ‘to give away’; **koṭuttōr** < **koṭutt** + **ōr**]

‘Alas! By hard means, I only got the reputation that I am the innocent girl’s mother, while her group of friends (had the privilege of) **giving** her away (in marriage to her lover).’

ōḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(past stem + glide + **ōḷ**)

akamali uvakaiyaḷ āki mukan ikuttu oyyeṇa **īraiñciyōḷe**
(aka.86:28-29)

[**īraiñcu** ‘to stoop, bow’; **īraiñciyōḷ** < **īraiñci** + glide **y** + **ōḷ**]

‘She was full of happiness that filled her heart. She stooped her face and **bowed** suddenly.’

ōṇ: (3rd person masculine singular)

(past stem + **ōṇ**)

iravalar iṇaiya vārā c cēṭpulam **paṭarntōṇ** (pati.61:9-10)

[**paṭar** ‘to proceed, move on to’; **paṭarntōṇ** < **paṭarnt** + **ōṇ**]

‘**H**e **proceeded** to a faraway land, as the suppliants grieved.’

(past stem + glide + **ōṇ**)

paṇṇirai ūrtiyoṭu **nalkiyōṇē** (puṇa.399:31-32)

[**nalku** ‘to give, provide’; **nalkiyōṇ** < **nalki** + glide **y** + **ōṇ**]

‘**H**e **gave away** many cattle with a cart.’

(past stem + **icin** + **ōn**)

peruntēr paṇṇi em muṇ kaṭai niṛi c **cenricinōnē** (*narr.300:5-6*)

[**cel** ‘to leave for a destination’; **cenricinōn** < **cenr** + **icin** + **ōn**]

‘He decorated his big chariot, parked it at our front door, and **left**.’

(Note that here **icin** precedes the PNG.)

tu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(past stem + **an** + **tu**)

ev ūr **ninranru** makiṇa niṇ tērē (*aink.62:4*)

[**nil** ‘to stand, stay’; **ninranru** < **ninr** + **an** + **tu**]

‘Makiṇa (O man of pleasure), in which town is your chariot **standing**?’

(past stem + **in** + **tu**)

paipaya c cuṭarum **curuṅkinru** oḷiyē (*pura.397:3-4*)

[**curuṅku** ‘to withdraw, dwindle’; **curuṅkinru** < **curuṅki** + **in** + **tu**]

‘The rays (of the sun) too **have** slowly **withdrawn** their light.’

kūntal kutiraiyai vāy pakuttiṭṭu p puṭaitta ṇāṇru inṇaṇ kol māyōṇ

eṇru **uṭkiṛru** eṇ neṇcu (*kali.103:53-55*)

[**uṭku** ‘to be frightened’; **uṭkiṛru** < **uṭki** + **in** + **tu**]

‘When he split open the demon named Kūntal, who was in the form of a horse, and beat him up, my heart **was frightened** thinking “Is Māyōṇ (Vishnu) of this nature?”’

tāyirrē taṇ am puṇal

(*pari.6:10*)

[**tā** ‘to spread’; **tāyirru** < **tāy** + **in** + **tu**;

tāyirrē < **tāyirru** + **ē** particle]

‘The beautiful cool flood **spread**.’

NON-PAST PERSONAL VERBS

GENERAL: See “Past Personal Verbs” for general information on personal verbs. The action indicated by the non-past personal verbs might be ongoing or forthcoming.

FORMATION: The non-past personal verbs are formed by suffixation. A suffix indicating the person-number-gender of the doer/creator of the action/state is added to the non-past/non-completive stem of the verb. Very rarely the affix **an** intervenes between the non-past/non-completive stem and the PNG suffix. See “The Past Stem” and “Notes on Miscellaneous Items” for more on **an**. See “The Non-Past Stem” and “Person-Number-Gender” for information on the non-past stem and the PNG categories.

PNG for non-past affirmative finite verbs

1st person singular: **al**, **an**, **en**, **ēn**, **u**

1st person plural, honorific: **am**, **ām**, **um**, **ēm**, **ōm**

2nd person singular: **āy**, **i**, **ī**, **ai**

- 2nd person plural, honorific: **ir, ĩr**
 3rd person masculine singular: **aṇ, āṇ, um**
 3rd person feminine singular: **aḷ, āḷ, um**
 3rd person human plural, honorific: **a, ar, ār**
 3rd person neuter singular: **atu, (u)m, untu**¹
 3rd person neuter plural: **a, um**

EXAMPLES

Formation Mechanism: non-past stem ± **aṇ** + PNG

PNG Structure and Example

a:

(3rd person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + **a**)

eṇṇum cāṇṇōr cāṇṇōr pālar āpa cālār cālār pālar ākupa

(*pura.218:5-7*)

[āpa < āp + a; ākupa < ākup + a]

‘Always, the noble ones **will belong** in the group of the noble ones.
 And those who are not noble **will belong** in the group of those who
 are not noble.’

pacantu nī iṇaiyaiyāy nīttalum nīppavō

(*kali.150:10*)

[nī ‘to depart, forsake’; nīppa < nīpp + a]

‘While you are pale like this, **will he** even dare to **forsake** (you)?’

¹ Actually, **untu** contains two suffixes: **um** and **tu**. However, Tolkāppiyam says that **um** “becomes” **untu**: cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 292.

maṟumai ulakamum maṟu iṇṇu **eytupa** ceṟunarum viḷaiyum ceyir tīr
 kāṭci c ciṟuvar p payanta cemmalōr (aka.66:2-4)

[**eytu** ‘to attain’; **eytupa** < **eytup** + **a**]

‘The noble people, who have begotten children whom even the adversaries like, **will attain** even the other world without mistake.’

(3rd person neuter plural)

(non-past stem + **a**)

puṭṭilul **en uḷa** (kali.117:8)

[**uḷ** ‘to exist’; **uḷa** < **uḷ** + **a**; **en** ‘what?’]

‘**What are** (the things) in this quiver?’

kaṇ paṇi **kalulpavāl** (kali.48:15)

[**kalul** ‘to emit tears’; **kalulpa** < **kalulp** + **a**]

‘(Her) eyes **emit** tears.’

poruḷē ... ōṭu mīṇ vaḷiyiṇ **keṭuva** (naṟr.16:4, 6)

[**keṭu** ‘to disappear, perish’; **keṭuva** < **keṭuv** + **a**]

‘Wealth **will disappear** like the path of a moving fish.’

(non-past stem + glide + **a**)

kaṇṇum **paṭukuva** maṇṇē (aka.11:15)

[**paṭu** ‘to close (the eyes)’; **paṭukuva** < **paṭuku** + glide **v** + **a**]

‘(My) eyes **will also sleep**.’

(non-past stem + **aṇ** + **a**)

am taḷir **takaippaṇa** (kali.3:17)

[**takai** ‘to stop, prevent’; **takaippaṇa** < **takaipp** + **aṇ** + **a**]

‘The soft shoots/young leaves **will stop** (you).’

atu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(non-past stem + **atu**)

nōy uṟu vennīr teḷippiṇ talai k koṇṭu **vēvatu** aḷittu iv ulaku
(*kali.142:53-54*)

[**vē** < **v e** ‘to steam’; **vēvatu** < **vēv** + **atu**]

‘If (I) sprinkle the hot water of my passion, this world **will** take it upon its head and **steam** up; it is a poor world.’

am: (1st person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + **am**)

yāmum **cērukam** nīyirum vammīṇ (*pati.49:1*)

[**cel** ‘to leave for a destination’; **cērukam** < **cēruk** + **am**]

‘**We will** also go. You too come along.’

muṟuval iṇṇakai **kāṇkam** (*narr.81:9*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇkam** < **kāṇk** + **am**]

‘**Let us / We will** look at (her) sweet smile.’

añcuvam tamiyam (*aka.72:10*)

[**añcu** ‘to be scared’; **añcuvam** < **añcuv** + **am**]

‘We are alone. **We will** be scared.’

(non-past stem + glide + **am**)

ivaḷ putu nāṇ oṭukkamum **kāṇkuvam** yāmē (*aka.112:18-19*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇkuvam** < **kāṇku** + glide **v** + **am**]

‘**Let us / We will** look at her novel shyness.’

yāmum em varai aḷavaiyiṇ **peṭkuvam** (aka.200:12-13)

[peḷ ‘to care for’; **peṭkuvam** < **peṭkuv** + **am**]

‘**We too will care for** (you) as much as we can.’

ar: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + **ar**)

putu p puṇal niṇṇai k koṇṭu īrttu uyppa k kaṇṭār **uḷar** (kali.98:25-26)

[uḷ ‘to exist’]

‘**There are** people who saw as the new flood drew you and dragged away.’

nī ceṇṇī emar **kāṇpar** (kali.110:22)

[kāṇ ‘to see’; **kāṇpar** < **kāṇp** + **ar**]

‘You just leave. (Otherwise) our kin **will see** (you).’

niṇ naṇu nutal **maṇapparō** (kuru.59:3-4)

[maṇa ‘to forget’; **maṇappar** < **maṇapp** + **ar**]

‘**Will he forget** your good-smelling forehead?’

varuvar ... tōḷi (aka.111:3)

[var ‘to come’; **varuvar** < **varuv** + **ar**]

‘**He will come** (back), my friend!’

mātar makaḷirum maintarum ... **ayarvar** taḷūu (kali.103:61-62)

[ayar ‘to celebrate’; **ayarvar** < **ayarv** + **ar**]

‘Lovable women and strong young men **celebrate** the bull raid.’

(non-past stem + glide + ar)

pukaḷ eṇiṇ uyirum koṭukkuvar (puṛa.182:5)

[koṭu 'to give away'; koṭukkuvar < koṭukku + glide v + ar]

'If it is (for) fame, they will even give their lives.'

muyakkam avarum perukuvar (aka.11:10-11)

[peru 'to get'; perukuvar < peruku + glide v + ar]

'He too will get to embrace (me).'

al: (1st person singular)

(non-past stem + al)

eyyāy āyiṇum uraippal tōḷi (aka.28:2)

[urai 'to tell'; uraippal < uraipp + al]

'Even if you may not understand, I will tell you, my friend!'

pal yāṇai kāṇpal avan tāṇaiyāṇē (pati.77:11-12)

[kāṇ 'to see'; kāṇpal < kāṇp + al]

'I see many elephants in his cavalry.'

iṇṇum vāḷval eṇ itaṇ paṇpē (puṛa.245:7)

[vāḷ 'to live'; vāḷval < vāḷv + al]

'I am still living. What is its nature?'

nummoṭu varuval eṇṛi (narr.162:6)

[var 'to come'; varuval < varuv + al]

'You are saying "I shall come with you." '

(non-past stem + glide + **aI**)

mati maruḷa k **kāṇkuvaI** (pati.73:16)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇkuvaI** < **kāṇku** + glide **v** + **aI**]

‘**I see** that (the enemies’) intelligence is bewildered.’

aI: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past stem + **aI**)

iraviṇ varutaI aṛiyāṇ varum varum **enpaI** tōli yāyē (aiṇk.272:4-5)

[**en** ‘to say’; **enpaI** < **enp** + **aI**]

‘He does not come at night (anymore). Friend, my mother **says** repeatedly that he does.’

vaṇṇamum vaṇappum variyum vāṭa **varuntuvaI** ivaI (aka.119:2-3)

[**varuntu** ‘to grieve’; **varuntuvaI** < **varuntuv** + **aI**]

‘**She is grieving**, as her complexion, beauty, and loveliness are wilting.’

taṇakku uraiṇṇu aṛiyēṇ **nāṇuvaI** ivaI eṇa (aka.203:5-6)

[**nāṇu** ‘to feel shy, embarrassed’; **nāṇuvaI** < **nāṇuv** + **aI**]

‘I do not know how to tell her, thinking that **she will be embarrassed**.’

kāmavēI viḷavu āyiṇ **kalaṇkuvaI** peritu (kali.27:24)

[**kalaṇku** ‘to be agitated’; **kalaṇkuvaI** < **kalaṇkuv** + **aI**]

‘**She will be much agitated** at the time of Kāmaṇ’s festival.’

(non-past stem + glide + **a|**)

nammoṭu ... muyakkam peṛṛō| pōla **uvakkuva|** vāliya neñcē
(aka.144:9-11)

[**uva** ‘to rejoice, be delighted’; **uvakkuva|** < **uvakku** + glide **v** + **a|**]
‘She will rejoice as though she embraced me.’

an:

(1st person singular)

(non-past stem ± glide + **an**)

u| uṭaintu **u|anē** (narr.199:4-5)

[**u|** ‘to exist; **u|an** < **u|** + **an**]
‘I exist with a broken heart.’

nōy eriyāka c cuṭiṇum cuḷarri en āyital| uḷlē **karappan**
(kali.142:51-52)

[**kara** ‘to hide, conceal’; **karappan** < **karapp** + **an**]
‘Even if lovesickness burns me like fire, I will wrap it up and **con-**
ceal it inside my fine eyelids.’

malai **akalkkuvanē** kaṭal **tūrkkuvanē** vāṇ **vīlkkuvanē** vaḷi
mārruvan (paṭṭ:271-272)

[**aka|** ‘to dig’; **tūr** ‘to fill up’; **vī|** ‘to fall’; **mārru** ‘to make retreat’
akalkkuvan < **akalkku** + glide **v** + **an**;
tūrkkuvan < **tūrkku** + glide **v** + **an**;
vīlkkuvan < **vīlkku** + glide **v** + **an**;
mārruvan < **mārruv** + **an**]

‘I will dig into the mountains; will fill up the sea; will make the
sky fall; and will change (the course of) the wind.’

avala neñcamoṭu celvaṇ (pura.210:13)

[cel 'to leave'; celvaṇ < celv + aṇ]

'I am leaving with a distressed heart.'

(3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past stem + aṇ)

varuvaṇ eṇṛa kōṇatu perumai (pura.217:7)

[var 'to come'; varuvaṇ < varuv + aṇ]

'the greatness of the king who said "He will come" '

(non-past stem + glide + aṇ)

iṇṇē varukuvaṇ oḷikka avaṛku iṭamē (pura.216:12)

[var 'to come'; varukuvaṇ < varuku + glide v + aṇ]

'He will come this very day. Reserve / Set aside a place for him.'

ām: (1st person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + ām)

teruḷum maruḷum mayaṅki varupavaḷ kūṛupa kēḷāmō ceṇṇu

(kali.144:7-8)

[kēḷ 'to hear, listen'; kēḷām < kēḷ + ām]

'Shall we go and listen to what she says when agitated between consciousness and confusion?'

aritē tōḷi nāṇ niruppām eṇṇu uṇartal (kali.137:1)

[nirū 'to make stand, check, hold'; niruppām < nirupp + ām]

'It is difficult, my friend, to be sure that we will contain our bashfulness.'

kātalar kātalum **kāṇpām** kollō (kali.36:20)
 [kāṇ ‘to see’; **kāṇpām** < **kāṇp** + **ām**]
 ‘And shall we experience our lover’s love, I wonder?’

aivaṇa veṇṇel arai uraluḷ peytu **iruvām** (kali.43:4)
 [iru ‘to pound’; **iruvām** < **iruv** + **ām**]
 ‘We shall pour the white paddy of aivaṇam into the mortar made of rock and pound.’

cellal tirkkam **celvām** (narr.284:4)
 [cel ‘to leave for a destination’; **celvām** < **celv** + **ām**]
 ‘We shall / Let us go and remove (her) distress.’

āy: (2nd person singular)

(non-past stem + **āy**)

ikaḷ malar k kaṇṇalā t **turappāyāl** (kali.135:13)
 [tura ‘to renounce, detach’; **turappāy** < **turapp** + **āy**]
 ‘You are renouncing her, so her eyes (losing luster) are ridiculed by the flowers.’
 ‘You leave her and the flowers ridicule her lusterless eyes.’

atu **poyppāy** nī (kali.108:57)
 [poy ‘to fail’; **poyppāy** < **poypp** + **āy**]
 ‘You will fail (in your promise).’

cey poruḷ muṇṇiya vaḷamaiyāṇ ākum poruḷ itu **enpāy** (kali.12:10-11)

[en ‘to say’; **enpāy** < **enp** + **āy**]
 ‘You are saying that the richness attained by seeking wealth is making this (enjoyment of love) possible.’

(non-past stem + glide + āy)

poruḷ vayiṇ **pōkuvāy**

(*kali.12:17*)

[**pō** ‘to go’; **pōkuvāy** < **pōku** + glide **v** + **āy**]²

‘You are going toward wealth.’

‘You are seeking wealth.’

ār: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + ār)

tūtu avar viṭutarār **turappār** kol

(*kali.33:24*)

[**tura** ‘to renounce, detach’; **turappār** < **turapp** + **ār**]

‘Will he renounce (me) without sending a message, I wonder?’

takavuṭai maṅkaiyar cāṇṇāmai cāṇṇār ikaḷiṇum kēḷvarai ētti

iṛaiñcuvār

(*pari.20:88-89*)

[**iṛaiñcu** ‘to bow’; **iṛaiñcuvār** < **iṛaiñcu** + **ār**]

‘Women with good qualities, filled with nobility, will praise and bow to their husbands even if the husbands despise them.’

āl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past stem + āl)

aṇṇaiyum ... eṇ mukam nōkkinaḷ evaṇ kol tōḷi **celvāl** eṇṇu kol

ceṇṇippal eṇṇu kol

(*narr.206:6, 8-9*)

[**cel** ‘to leave’; **celvāl** < **celv** + **āl**]

‘And mother looked at my face. What does it mean, my friend?

Whether she will (turn to you and) say “She will leave (for the millet field)” or she will imprison me (at home)?’

² It is conceivable to derive it from the non-past stem **pokuv** + **āy** PNG.

poruḷ vayiṇ iṛatti nī eṇa k kēṭpiṇ ... oḷi **ōṭarpāl** maṇṇō (*kali.10:8-9*)
 [ōṭu ‘to run (away), disappear fast’; **ōṭarpāl** < **ōṭu** + **kirp** + **āl**]
 ‘Will she lose her luster if she hears that you are leaving for the sake of (earning) wealth?’

āṇ: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past stem + **āṇ**)

yāṇṭu **oḷippāṇ** (*kali.146:31*)
 [oḷi ‘to hide’; **oḷippāṇ** < **oḷipp** + **āṇ**]
 ‘Where is he hiding?’

vārātu **amaivāṇō** (*kali.41:28*)
 [amai ‘to stay calm, remain undisturbed’]
 ‘Will he be calm without coming (here)?’

pal kāl muttu aṇi āram paṛṇaṇ **parivāṇāl** (*kali.79:12*)
 [pari ‘to pull, sever’; **parivāṇ** < **pariv** + **āṇ**]
 ‘He would grab and pull the necklace with many strands of pearls.’

(non-past stem + glide + **āṇ**)

mayil iyalār maruvuṇṭu marantu **amaikuvāṇ** (*kali. 30:6*)
 [amai ‘to stay calm, remain undisturbed’;
amaikuvāṇ < **amaiku** + glide **v** + **āṇ**]
 ‘He stays calm forgetting (me) and enjoying the closeness of women who are like peacocks.’

i: (2nd person singular)

(non-past stem + **i**)

poruḷ vayiṇ iṛatti nī (*kali.10:8*)

[**ira** ‘to depart’; **iratti** < **iratt** + **i**]
 ‘**You are departing** toward wealth.’
 ‘You are leaving for the sake of (earning) wealth.’

pulattiyāl emmē (aka.39:25)
 [**pula** ‘to sulk, be frustrated’; **pulatti** < **pulatt** + **i**]
 ‘**You are sulking** with me.’

mullaiyum pūttiyo (puṛa.242:6)
 [**pū** ‘to bloom’; **pūtti** < **pūtt** + **i**]
 ‘O jasmine, **do you dare to bloom?**’
 ‘O jasmine, have you dared to bloom?’

vaṛumai aṅcuti (aka.123:7)
 [**aṅcu** ‘to fear’; **aṅcuti** < **aṅcut** + **i**]
 ‘**You are afraid** of poverty.’

poruḷ nōkki ... nī pōkuti (kali.10:16)
 [**pōku** ‘to go’; **pōkuti** < **pōkut** + **i**]
 ‘**You are leaving**, seeking wealth.’

veyiloṭu evaṇ viraintu cēri (kali.108:39)
 [**cel** ‘to leave for a destination’; **cēri** < **cel** + **t** + **i**;
virai ‘to go fast’]
 ‘**Why are you rushing** along with the (heat of the) sun?’

ir: (2nd person plural/honorific)

(non-past stem + **ir**)

uyaṅkiṇaḷ eṇṇu āṅku ucātir (kali.143:18)
 [**ucā** ‘to enquire’; **ucātir** < **ucāt** + **ir**]
 ‘**You are enquiring** about his wellbeing because she is grieving.’

i-c-curam aṛitalum aṛitirō (aka.8:17-18)
 [aṛi ‘to know’; aṛitir < aṛit + ir]
 ‘Do you know this forest at all?’

kāṇam iṛappa eṇṇutir āyiṇ (aka.5:15-16)
 [eṇṇu ‘to think’; eṇṇutir < eṇṇut + ir]
 ‘if you are thinking of passing through the jungle’

kaṇicci k kūrmpaṭai k kaṭuntīṛal oruvaṇ piṇikkum kālai iraṇkuvir
 mātō (puṛa.195:4-5)
 [iraṇku ‘to feel sorry, regret’; iraṇkuvir < iraṇkuv + ir]
 ‘Alas, you will feel sorry when the strong powerful one (Death)
 with the sharp weapon of a trident binds you.’

ī³: (2nd person singular)

(non-past stem + ī)
 vil ṇāṇ uḷartīyē (kali.7:6)
 [uḷar ‘to pluck’; uḷartī < uḷart + ī]
 ‘You are plucking the cord of your bow.’

īr⁴: (2nd person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + īr)
 mayāṇkiṇāḷ eṇṇu maruḷtīr (kali.143:19)
 [maruḷ ‘to be confused’; maruḷtīr < maruḷt + īr]
 ‘You are puzzled because she is agitated.’

³ It is a variant of i.

⁴ It is a variant of ir.

eṇ ceytāl kol **eṇpīr** kēṭṭimin (kali.143:9)
 [eṇ ‘to say, ask’; **eṇpīr** < **eṇp** + **īr**]⁵
 ‘You are asking “What did she do?” Please listen.’

niṇ uṛṛa allal urai eṇa eṇnai **viṇavuvīr** (kali.144:10-11)
 [viṇavu ‘to enquire’; **viṇavuvīr** < **viṇavuv** + **īr**]
 ‘You are asking me “Tell us (about) the distress you are experiencing.”’

u: (1st person singular)

(non-past stem + **u**)

tīṭṭimai teyvattāl kaṇṭi **teḷikku** (kali.91:7-8)
 [teḷi ‘to make clear, assure’; **teḷikku** < **teḷikk** + **u**]⁶
 ‘See (my) harmlessness. I shall clarify it by (the name of) god.’

añcal ōmpu niṇ aṇi nalam **nukarku** (kuri:181)
 [nukar ‘to enjoy’; **nukarku** < **nukark** + **u**]
 ‘Stop being afraid. I shall / Let me enjoy your loveliness.’

untu (**um** + **tu**):

(3rd person neuter singular)

(non-past stem + **untu**)

kīḷ nīrāṇ mīṇ **vaḷaṅkuntu** (pura.396:1)
 [vaḷaṅku ‘to move around’; **vaḷaṅkuntu** < **vaḷaṅku** + **um** + **tu**]
 ‘The fish move around in low waters.’

⁵ The literary context suggests that the form **eṇpīr** could be a participial noun.

⁶ Some might consider the (k)ku itself, not just u, as the PNG.

um:

(1st person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + **um**)em mutumai eḷḷal aḥtu **amaikum** (aka.6:14-15)[**amai** ‘to agree with, remain undisturbed’;**amaikum** < **amaik** + **um**]‘Do not ridicule our old age; **we will remain undisturbed** about it.’nuntai viyaṇ mārpil ... taiiya kōtai paripu āṭa k **kāṇkum**(kali.80:24, 25-26)[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇkum** < **kāṇk** + **um**]‘**We shall see** you playing by pulling the garland worn on your father’s wide chest.’mella mella il **ākutum**(kuru.290:6)[**āku** ‘to become’; **ākutum** < **ākut** + **um**]‘**We are becoming / turning into** nothing slowly.’piḷaiyalaḷ mātō **piritum** nām eṇiṇē(aka.5:28)[**piri** ‘to depart’; **piritum** < **pirit** + **um**]‘Alas! If **we would depart** she will not survive.’yām avaṇiṇṇum **varutum**(cīru:143)[**var** ‘to come’; **varutum** < **varut** + **um**]‘**We are coming** from there.’yām niṇṇai **verūutum** kāṇum kaṭai(kali.87:1-2)[**veru** ‘to shy away, shun’; **verūutum** < **veru** + **t** + **um**]‘**We shun you** when we see you.’

celva, **cērum** em tol pati p peyartu (*poru.121*)
 [cel ‘to leave for a destination’; **cērum** < cel + t + um]
 ‘Lord, **we shall go / proceed** toward our ancient city.’

(3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past stem + **um**)

aṛivuṭaiyōṇ āṛu aracum **cellum** (*pura.183:7*)
 [cel ‘to go’; **cellum** < cel + um]
 ‘Even the king **will go** in the path of the wise man.’

aṇṭiraṇ **varūum** (*pura.241:2*)
 [var ‘to come’; **varūum** < var + um]
 ‘(The donor) Aṇṭiraṇ **will come**.’

tuyar ceytal peṇ aṇru punaiyiḷāy eṇa k kūṛi t **tolūum** (*kali.60:6, 7*)
 [tolu ‘to bow, worship’; **tolūum** < tolu + um]
 ‘He **would do obeisance** to you saying “O one with ornaments, creating agony (of passion) is not a feminine virtue.” ’

kollaṇai **irakkum** tiruntilai neṭuvēḷ vaṭitticiṇ eṇavē (*pura.180:12-13*)
 [ira ‘to beg, request’; **irakkum** < irakk + um]
 ‘He **would beg** the blacksmith saying “Make a long spear with a perfect leaf/tip.”

ampoṭu vēḷ nuḷai vaḷi ellām tāṇ **nīrkum** maṇṇē (*pura.235:7*)
 [nil ‘to stand, stay’; **nīrkum** < nīrk + um]
 ‘He **would stand up** wherever arrows and spears enter.’

(3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past stem + **um**)

ivaḷum **tēmpum**

(*kuri*:26)

[**tēmpu** ‘to sob’; **tēmpum** < **tēmpu** + **um**]

‘She also **is sobbing**.’

(non-past stem + glide + **um**)

ciṟappiṇ pālāl tāyum maṇam **tiriyum**

(*puṛa*.183:4)

[**tiri** ‘to change, twist, whirl’; **tiriyum** < **tiri** + glide **y** + **um**]

‘Even mother **will change** her mind on account of eminence.’

(3rd person neuter singular)

(non-past stem + **um**)

vantu maturai matil **porūum** ... am taṇ puṇal vaiyai āṛu

(*pari*.12:9-10)

[**poru** ‘to dash against, fight back’; **porūum** < **poru** + **um**]

‘The beautiful cool flooded Vaiyai river **is coming and dashing** against the Madurai fortress.’

maññai ... naṇantalai pulampa k **kūum**

(*kuṛu*.391:7-9)

[**kū** ‘to call out’; **kūum** < **kū** + **um**]

‘The peacock **is screeching** as the vast region resounds.’

niṇṇai **viyakkum** iv ulakam

(*puṛa*.167:11)

[**viya** ‘to adore, admire’; **viyakkum** < **viyakk** + **um**]

‘This world **admires** you.’

nīṛ nīṭu āṭiṇ kaṇṇum civakkum āṛntōṛ vāyil tēṇum **puḷikkum**
(*kuṛu.354:1-2*)

[**puḷi** ‘to lose original quality, to change to a lower taste, become sour’; **puḷikkum** < **puḷikk** + **um**]

‘One’s eyes will turn red if one plays/bathes for long in the water. Even honey **will turn sour** in the mouths of those who have had it to the full.’

kal iṛantu ceyal cūḷnta poruḷ poruḷ **ākumō** (k*ali.2:16*)
[**ā** ‘to be’; **ākum** < **āk** + **um**]⁷

‘**Will** the wealth that you are planning to make by going beyond the mountain **be** (true) wealth?’

niṇ tēṛ pūṇṭa neṭu naṇ māṇ teṇ maṇi vantu **eṭuppumē**
(k*ali.70:17-18*)

[**eṭu** ‘to arouse, stir up’; **eṭuppum** < **eṭupp** + **um**]

‘The (sound of the) bells worn by the good tall horses tied to your chariot **will reach** here and **arouse** us / **wake** us up.’

(3rd person neuter plural)

(non-past stem + **um**)

tūtum ceṇṇaṇa tōḷum **ceṇṇum** (a*ka.251:1*)

[**ceṇṇu** ‘to swell up due to excitement’; **ceṇṇum** < **ceṇṇu** + **um**]

‘The message has gone (to your lover); your shoulders also **will swell up** (with excitement about his return).’

⁷ Some might derive it from **āku** + **um**.

nīr nīṭu āṭiṇ kaṇṇum **civakkum** āmtōr vāyil tēṇum puḷikkum
(*kuru.354:1-2*)

[**civa** ‘to turn red’; **civakkum** < **civakk** + **um**]

‘One’s eyes **will turn red** if one plays/bathes for long in the water.
Even honey will turn sour in the mouths of those who have had it to
the full.’

en: (1st person singular)

(bare stem/non-past stem + **en**)

iṇṇum uḷ**enē** tōḷi (*kuru.310:5*)

[**uḷ** ‘to exist’; **uḷen** < **uḷ** + **en**]

‘Alas, **I still exist**, my friend!’

amar variṇ aṇcēṇ **peyarkkuven** numar variṇ **maraikuvēn**
(*narr.362:9-10*)

[**peyar** ‘to move’; **marai** ‘to hide’;

peyarkkuven < **peyarkkuv** + **en**;

maraikuvēn < **maraikuv** + **en**]⁸

‘If a war breaks up, **I will dodge** without fear. If your kin come **I**
will hide myself.’

niṇ āy nalam **marappenō** (*aka.39:4-5*)

[**marā** ‘to forget’; **marappen** < **marapp** + **en**]

‘Will **I forget** your fine loveliness?’

niṇ kaṇṇāl **kāppenman** yāṇ (*kali.39:43*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāppen** < **kāṇp** + **en**]

⁸ This is a good example to illustrate that the **kk** in the non-past stem **peyarkk** signifies causativity: **peyarkkuven** ‘I will move’; **peyarkkuven** ‘I will make __ move.’

‘**I** will definitely **see** (my groom’s beauty at the wedding) through your eyes.’

parukittai **taṇṭuven** (kali.85:35, 36)
 [taṇṭu ‘to punish’; **taṇṭuven** < taṇṭuv + en]
 ‘Drink (the milk), or **I** will **punish** you.’

ēm: (1st person plural/honorific)

(non-past stem + **ēm**)

kaṇṇoṭu **celvēṁ** (kali.116:1)
 [cel ‘to leave’; **celvēṁ** < celv + ēm]
 ‘**We** are going with the calves.’

yāraiyo niṇ **pulakkēṁ** (aka.46:7)
 [pula ‘to sulk, chide’; **pulakkēṁ** < pulakk + ēm]
 ‘Who are you (to us after all)? **We** are sulking with you.’

iṇiyavai peṇṇē taṇi t taṇi **nukarkēṁ** taruka eṇa viḷaiyā (pati.38:13-14)
 [**nukar** ‘to enjoy’; **nukarkēṁ** < nukark + ēm]
 ‘Before one could wish “If we get good things **we** will **enjoy** them individually/privately; therefore give.” ... ’

aṇṇaikku **aṇivippēṁ** kol aṇiviyēṁ kol (aka.52:9-10)
 [aṇivi ‘to make known, inform’; **aṇivippēṁ** < aṇivipp + ēm]
 ‘**Shall we** inform mother or not?’

poruvēṁ eṇa p peyarkoṭuttu (paṭṭ:289)
 [poru ‘to fight back’; **poruvēṁ** < poruv + ēm]
 ‘evading (the enemies) thinking, “**We** shall **fight** back” ’

niṇ kuṛi vantū em katavam cēmtu acaitta kai vaḷaiyiṇ vāy viṭal mālai
makalirai **nōvēmō** (kali.68:8-9)

[**nō** ‘to accuse, blame’; **nōvēm** < **nōv** + **ēm**]

‘**Shall we blame** your (other) women who come for a rendezvous with you and have the nature of coming to our door (hoping to see you here) and announcing their arrival through the bangles on their hands which they put on our door?’

(non-past stem + glide + **ēm**)

makalirai ... amarpurra maintar akalam **kaṭikuvēm** eṇpavai
yārkkāṇum muṭi poruḷ aṇṇu (pari.20:91-93)

[**kaṭi** ‘to avoid’; **kaṭikuvēm** < **kaṭiku** + glide **v** + **ēm**]

‘It is not possible for anyone to say that **we shall avoid** the wide chest of the young men who desired (other women).’

ēn: (1st person singular)

(non-past stem + **ēn**)

iṇṇum ... **uḷḷēn** (pura.365:7, 9)

[**uḷ** ‘to exist’; **uḷḷēn** < **uḷ** + **ēn**]

‘**I still exist.**’

āṭu eṇil āṭalum **ārrukēn** (kali.140:14)

[**ārru** ‘to perform’; **ārrukēn** < **ārruk** + **ēn**]

‘If you tell me to sing, **I can perform** singing also.’

niṇ viḷumam **uvappēn** (narr.360:10)

[**uva** ‘to rejoice / be delighted’; **uvappēn** < **uvapp** + **ēn**]

‘**I rejoice** (about) your greatness.’

ivaḷai c col āṭi k **kāṇpēn** takaittu (kali.56:13)

[**kāṇ** 'to see'; **kāṇpēn** < **kāṇp** + **ēn**]

'I shall stop her and **try** to converse with her.'

ciṟu puṇ mālai uṇmai **aṟivēn** tōḷi avar k kāṇā ūṇkē (kuru.352:5-6)

[**aṟi** 'to know, understand'; **aṟivēn** < **aṟiv** + **ēn**]

'When I do not see him, I realize the existence of the small mean evening.'

yāṇē **maruḷvēn** (kuru.94:3)

[**maruḷ** 'to be confused'; **maruḷvēn** < **maruḷv** + **ēn**]

'I am confused.'

(non-past stem + glide + **ēn**)

uḷḷi varukuvar kollō uḷaintu yāṇ eḷḷi **irukkuvēn** maṇ kolō

(kali.142:31-32)

[**iru** 'to remain, stay'; **irukkuvēn** < **irukku** + glide **v** + **ēn**]

'Will he think of me and come (to me), I wonder. (If he comes) **will** I sulk and **remain despising** him, I wonder.'

tōyntārai **aṟikuvēn** yāṇ (kali.79:9)

[**aṟi** 'to know, understand'; **aṟikuvēn** < **aṟiku** + glide **v** + **ēn**]

'I will know / find out about those who immersed themselves on your chest.'

ai: (2nd person singular)

(non-past stem + **ai**)

oḷ oḷi **āvai** oru kuḷai **āvai** (pari.15:55)

[**ā** 'to be'; **āvai** < **āv** + **ai**]

'You are the bright light. You are the one with one kuḷai (earring).'

niṇ perum celvam yārkku eñcuvaiyē (pura.213:16)
 [eñcu ‘to leave behind’; eñcuvai < eñcuv + ai]
 ‘To whom will you leave behind your great wealth?’

paḷi tapu nāyirē pātu ariyātār kaṇ kaḷiya k kataḷvai (kali.143:22-23)
 [kataḷ ‘to rush’; kataḷvai < kataḷv + ai]
 ‘O flawless sun, in order to be excess(ively hot), you are rushing toward those who do not know the way of the world.’

(non-past stem + glide + ai)

ceru p pala ceykuvai (pati.36:14)
 [cey ‘to do’; ceykuvai < ceyku + glide v + ai]
 ‘You make many wars.’

pakal nī varinum puṇarkuvai ... meṇ tōḷē (aka.18:16, 18)
 [puṇar ‘to unite’; puṇarkuvai < puṇarku + glide v + ai]
 ‘Even if you come during the day you will unite with / join (her) soft shoulders.’

ōm: (1st person honorific/plural)

(non-past stem + glide + ōm)

pulampoṭu terumaral uyakkamum tīrkkuvōm (pura.381:15-16)
 [tīr ‘to vanish, to rectify/cure’;
tīrkkuvōm < tīrkku + glide v + ōm]
 ‘We will get rid of (our) loneliness and weariness due to wandering.’

m: (3rd person neuter singular)

(non-past stem + m)

puṇai kaḷal maintaroṭu tār aṇi maintar tava p payaṇ canm

(pari.22:27-28)

[cāl 'to be abundant'; cāṇm < cāl + m]⁹

'The fruit of penance (performed) by young men wearing warrior's anklets and young men wearing garlands is abundant.'

⁹ Some might treat cāṇm as derived from cāl + um > *cālm > cāṇm.

NEGATIVE PERSONAL VERBS

GENERAL: See "Past Personal Verbs."

FORMATION: The negative personal verbs are formed by suffixation:

- (i) a PNG suffix beginning with a long vowel is added directly to the bare verb stem. In negative personal verbs, PNG suffixes beginning with a short vowel are never added directly to the bare verb stem unless the latter is **al** 'not to be ...' or **il** 'to be non-existent.'
- (ii) **al** is added to a bare verb stem or a non-past stem ending with (k)k and is subsequently followed by a PNG suffix.
- (iii) **il** is added to the past stem of a verb and is subsequently followed by a PNG suffix.

The negative verbs do not normally refer to any particular time. However, it is possible to suppose that **al** "co-indicates" the incomplete aspect of negation whereas **il** "co-indicates" the complete aspect of

negation because **al** is appended to a non-past stem while **il** is appended to a past stem.

See “The Negative **al** and **il**” for information on periphrastic negative constructions formed by using conjugated forms of the intrinsically negative verbs **al** and **il**.

PNG for negative finite verbs

1st person singular: **an**, **en**, **ēn**, **ēl**

1st person plural/honorific: **am**, **ām**, **ēm**

2nd person singular: **āy**, **ai**, **ōy**

2nd person plural/honorific: **ir**, **īr**

3rd person masculine singular: **an**, **ān**

3rd person feminine singular: **al**, **āl**

3rd person human plural/honorific: **ar**, **ār**

3rd person neuter singular: **atu**, **ātu**

3rd person neuter plural: **a**, **ā**, **m**

See “Person-Number-Gender” for information on the PNG categories.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare verb stem + PNG beginning with a long vowel

bare verb stem + **al** + PNG

non-past stem in (k)k + **al** + PNG

past stem + **il** + PNG

*PNG Structure and Example***a:** (3rd person neuter plural)(bare stem + **al** + **a**)kaḷiru iṇṇu **peyarala** paṇicilar kaṭumpē (pura.205:14)[**peyar** ‘to move, leave’; **peyarala** < **peyar** + **al** + **a**]‘The group of suppliants **will not move** without (getting) the elephants.’**atu:** (3rd person neuter singular)(bare stem + **al** + **atu**)iravu iṇṇantu ellai **tōṇṇalatu** (narr.378:6)[**tōṇṇu** ‘to appear’; **tōṇṇalatu** < **tōṇṇu** + **al** + **atu**]‘The sun **does not appear** surpassing/overwhelming the night.’**am:** (1st person plural/honorific)(bare stem + **al** + **am**)peṭpu iṇṇital yām **vēṇṭalamē** (pura.205:2)[**vēṇṭu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭalam** < **vēṇṭu** + **al** + **am**]‘**We do not want** the gift (provided) without caring.’(bare stem + glide + **al** + **am**)ciṇṇukārōṭṭaṇ payiṇoṭu cēṇṇtiya kal pōl **piriyalam** (aka.1:5-6)[**piri** ‘to separate’; **piriyalam** < **piri** + glide **y** + **al** + **am**]‘Like the stones, which the man who sharpens objects stuck together with glue, **we will not be separated.**’

(non-past stem + **al** + **am**)

toṭukalam kuṟuka vāral ... mārpe (aka.196:8, 13)

[**toṭu** ‘to touch’; **toṭukalam** < **toṭuk** + **al** + **am**]

‘We will not touch your chest. Do not come close.’

ar: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(bare stem + **al** + **ar**)

niṇ munṇōr ellām pārppār nōvaṇa **ceyyalar** (puṟa.43:13-14)

[**cey** ‘to do’; **ceyyalar** < **cey** + **al** + **ar**]

‘None of your ancestors would do things that would hurt the brahmins.’

‘None of your ancestors did things that the brahmins would suffer from.’

(An example to show that the negative verb does not indicate any particular time.)

(bare stem + glide + **al** + **ar**)

eṇṇum eṇ tōl piripu **aṟiyalarē** (narr.1:2)

[**aṟi** ‘to know’; **aṟiyalar** < **aṟi** + glide **y** + **al** + **ar**]

‘He never knows separation from my shoulders.’

aḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(bare stem + glide + **al** + **aḷ**)

pīlaiyalaḷ mātō piritum nām eṇiṇē (aka.5:28)

[**pīlai** ‘to survive’; **pīlaiyalaḷ** < **pīlai** + glide **y** + **al** + **aḷ**]

‘Alas, she will not survive if we depart.’

(past stem + **il** + **aḷ**)

acai naṭai p pētai **melintilaḷ** (kuru.182:6-7)

[**meli** ‘to grow thin, be weary’; **melintilaḷ** < **melint** + **il** + **aḷ**]

‘The innocent young woman, who is staggering, is not weary.’

an:

(1st person singular)

(non-past stem + **al** + **an**)ival ... oli kūntal viṭṭu **amaikalanē** (narr.141:11-12)[**amai** 'to stay calm, undisturbed'; **amaikalan** < **amaik** + **al** + **an**]

'I will not be calm if I leave her luscious tresses.'

(3rd person masculine singular)

(bare stem + glide + **al** + **an**)valiyar eṇa valī **molīyalaṇ** (pura.239:6)[**moḷi** 'to say'; **molīyalaṇ** < **moḷi** + glide **y** + **al** + **an**]

'He will not say words after them (i.e., repeat what they said) just because they are powerful.'

ā: (3rd person neuter plural)(bare stem + **ā**)mā āṭiya pulāṇ nāñcil **āṭā** (pati.25:1)[**āṭu** 'to move'; **āṭā** < **āṭu** + **ā**]

'The plows will not move in the land where animals have moved.'

'The plows will not move in the land which the animals have destroyed.'

ātu: (3rd person neuter singular)(bare stem + **ātu**)peyal **ānātē** vāṇam (kuru.380:3)[**ān** 'to be content with'; **ānātu** < **ān** + **ātu**;**ānātē** < **ānātu** + **ē** particle]

‘The sky **will not be content with** pouring.’

‘The sky will not stop pouring.’

(bare stem + glide + ātu)

vittu varattiṇ cāvātu

(*pura.137:5*)

[cā ‘to wither’; cāvātu < cā + glide v + ātu]

‘The seeds **will not die** of dryness.’

(non-past stem + al + ātu)

turaṇtu amaikallār kātalar maṇantu **amaikallātu** eṇ maṭam keḷu
neñcē (*aiṅk.457:3-4*)

[amai ‘to stay calm, undisturbed’;

amaikallātu < amaik + al + ātu]

‘My lover will not renounce me and be calm. My much ignorant heart **will not** forget him and **be calm**.’

ām: (1st person plural/honorific)

(bare stem + ām)

amai t tōlāy niṇ mey vāl uppiṇ vilai **eyyām** (*aka.390:10-11*)

[ey ‘to know’; **eyyām** < ey + ām]

‘O you with bamboo (like) shoulders, **we do not know** the price of the salt on your body.’

āy¹: (2nd person singular)

(bare stem + āy)

eṇ karantu uṇaivōr uḷ vaḷi **kāṭṭāy**

(*narr.196:6*)

[kāṭṭu ‘to show’; **kāṭṭāy** < kāṭṭu + āy]

¹ Personal verb forms ending with this suffix bear a resemblance to the imperative/optative forms ending with the suffix āy. See “The Imperative/Optative.”

‘You are not showing me the direction/way in which he who is hiding away from me lives.’

(bare stem + glide + āy)

anṛu nam aṛiyāy (aka.33:18)

[aṛi ‘to know’; aṛiyāy < aṛi + glide y + āy]

‘You did not know us then.’

(An example to show that the negative verb does not indicate any particular time.)

(non-past stem + al + āy)

em kēḷvan tarutalum tarukallāy tuṇai allai (kali.148:17)

[tar ‘to give’; tarukallāy < taruk + al + āy]

‘You don’t even bring back my husband. You are no companion.’

ār: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(bare stem + ār)

ciṛu puṇ mālaiyum uḷḷār avar (aka.114:6)

[uḷḷu ‘to think, remember, contemplate; uḷḷār < uḷḷu + ār]

‘He does not think (of me) even in the lowly mean evening.’

(bare stem + ār)

maram cām maruntum koḷḷār māntar uram cā c ceyyār uyar tavam (naṛṛ.226:1-2)

[koḷ ‘to take’; cey ‘to do’; koḷḷār < koḷ + ār; ceyyār < cey + ār]

‘People will not get/obtain/draw medicine which kills the tree; **they will not do** high penance wearing out their strength.’

aṛṛai t tiṅkaḷ av veṇ nilaviṇ entaiyum uṭaiyēm em kuṇṛum piṛar (puṛa.112:1-2)
koḷār

[koḷ ‘to take hold’; koḷār < koḷ + ār]

‘We had our father (living then) on that full moon (night). **Neither** did **others take hold of** our hill in that white moonlight.’

(An example to show that the negative verb does not indicate any particular time.)

(bare stem + glide + ār)

tī nīrai k kaḷḷiṇum maḱiḷ ceyum eṇa uraittum **amaiyār** (*kali.4:13-14*)

[amai ‘to be satisfied, relax’; **amaiyār** < amai + glide y + ār]

‘**He will not be satisfied** even after saying that the sweet water (of my lips) is more intoxicating than toddy.’

(bare stem + glide + ār)

peṇṭir iṇṇum ōvār eṇ tiṇattu alarē (*narr.116:11-12*)

[ō ‘to end, cease’; **ōvār** < ō + glide v + ār]²

‘The townswomen **have not yet ended** the gossip about me.’

(non-past stem + al + ār)

tiṅkaḷ aravu uṇiṇ **tīrkkalār** āyiṇum tam kātal kāṭṭuvar cāṇṇavar

(*kali.140:17-18*)

[tīr ‘to vanish; to rectify, cure’; **tīrkkalār** < tīrkk + al + ār]

‘When the moon is gotten by the snake (during an eclipse), the noble people would show their love for it although **they are/will not** (be able to) **rectify** (its agony).’

(non-past stem + al + ār)

turaṇtu **amaikallār** kātalar maṇantu amaikallātu eṇ maṭam keḷu
neñcē (*aiṅk.457:3-4*)

[amai ‘to stay calm/undisturbed’; **amakallār** < amaik + al + ār]

‘My lover **will not** renounce me and **be calm**. My much ignorant heart will not forget him and be calm.’

² Some might take the stem to be ōvu.

āḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(bare stem + glide + **āḷ**)

pāṇaṇ cūṭāṇ pāṭiṇi aṇiyāḷ (pura.242:3)

[aṇi 'to decorate with, wear'; aṇiyāḷ < aṇi + glide y + āḷ]

'The bard will not wear (the jasmine); the bardess **will not decorate** herself **with** (it).'

(non-past stem + **al** + **āḷ**)

nāṇum niṛaiyum uṇarkallāḷ (kali.146:6)

[uṇar 'to realize, understand'; uṇarkallāḷ < uṇark + **al** + **āḷ**]

'She **does not understand** (the significance of) her bashfulness and virtue.'

ā(a)n: (3rd person masculine singular)

(bare stem + **ān**)

pāṇaṇ cūṭāṇ pāṭiṇi aṇiyāḷ (pura.242:3)

[cūṭu 'to wear'; cūṭāṇ < cūṭu + **ān**]

'The bard will not wear (the jasmine); the bardess **will not decorate** herself **with** (it).'

ītal āṇāṇ vēntē (pura.139:11)

[āṇ 'to be content with'; āṇāṇ < āṇ + **ān**]

'The king **is not satisfied/content** with his giving.'

(Note that **āṇāṇ** is a negative form. See "A Note on the Verb **ān**.")

iraviṇil patam perāān (kali.46:10)

[peru 'to obtain, get'; perāān < peru + **ān**]

'He **will not get** the opportunity (to have me) at night.'

(non-past stem+ ān)

uḷaiyiṇ **pōkān**

(*kuru.294:7*)

[**pō** ‘to go, leave’; **pōkān** < **pōk** + **ān**]

‘He will not go (away) from me.’

(non-past stem + al + ān)

tān urra nōy **uraikkallān** peyarum maṇ

(*kali.37:4-5*)

[**urai** ‘to express, utter’; **uraikkallān** < **uraikk** + **al** + **ān**]³

‘What a pity, he moves away; (he) would not speak about his (love)sickness!’

ir: (2nd person plural/honorific)

(bare stem + al + ir)

kaṇṭaṇir āyiṇ **kaḷaḷalir** maṇṇō

(*aka.130:2*)

[**kaḷaru** ‘to chide’; **kaḷaḷalir** < **kaḷaru** + **al** + **ir**]

‘If you had seen (it) you would definitely not chide (me).’

īr:

(2nd person plural/honorific)

(bare stem + īr)

ivaḷ iṭai mulai k kiṭantum naṭuṅkal **ānīr**

(*kuru.178:3-4*)

[**ān** ‘to be content with’; **ānīr** < **ān** + **īr**]

‘Although you are lying in the middle of her breasts you do not stop trembling/shivering.’

(Note that **ānīr** is negative. See “A Note on the Verb **ān**.”)

³ It could be interpreted as a participial noun in this context.

en: (1st person singular)

(bare stem + **al** + **en**)

oru nāl puṇara p puṇariṇ arai nāl vāḷkkaiyum **vēṇṭalen** yāṇē
(*kuṟu.280:4-5*)

[**vēṇṭu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭalen** < **vēṇṭu** + **al** + **en**]

‘If I unite with her for a day’s union, I **will not wish** for even a half-a-day’s living (further).’

ēl: (1st person singular)

(bare stem + **ēl**)

taṇiyē varutal naṇi pulampu uṭaittu eṇa **vārēl** maṇ yāṇ (*narr.267:7-8*)
[**var** ‘to come’; **vārēl** < **var** + **ēl**]⁴

‘I **do not come** (to the shore any more) because coming alone feels quite lonely.’

ē(e)m: (1st person plural/honorific)

(bare stem + **ēm**)

piṇarum oruttiyai nam maṇai t tantu vatuvai ayaṁtaṇai eṇpa aṭtu
yām **kūrēm** (*aka.46:8-10*)

[**kūru** ‘to state, discuss’; **kūrēm** < **kūru** + **ēm**]

‘They say that you brought another woman to our house and celebrated the wedding. **We do not / will not speak** of it.’

uṇarcci illōr uṭaimai **uḷlēṁ** (*pura.197:16*)

[**uḷ(lu)** ‘to think’; **uḷlēṁ** < **uḷlu** + **ēm**]

⁴ This form, the only attestation with **ēl** as PNG, is suspicious. It could be an instance of metanalysis. Perhaps those who edited the anthologies analyzed **vārēṇman** as **vārēl** + **maṇ** instead of **vārēṇ** + **maṇ**.

‘We will not think about the possession/wealth of those who do not have feelings/sentiments.’

ivaṇai p poyppa **viṭēem** (kali.89:13-14)
 [viṭu ‘to let go, permit’; **viṭēem** < viṭu + ēm]
‘We will not let him lie.’

ēn: (1st person singular)

(bare stem + **ēn**)

paṭṭiṇam periṇum **vārēn** (paṭṭ:218, 220)
 [var ‘to come along’; **vārēn** < var + ēn]
‘Even if I get the coastal town, I will not come (with you).’

cellēn cellēn piṇar mukam **nōkkēn** (puṇa.399:14)
 [cel ‘to leave for a destination’; **nōkku** ‘to look at’;
cellēn < cel + ēn; **nōkkēn** < nōkku + ēn]
‘I will not go. I will not go. I will not look at the faces of others.’

eṇ vāy niṇ moḷi **māṭṭēn** (narr.342:3)
 [māṭṭu ‘to fasten, stick’; **māṭṭēn** < māṭṭu + ēn]⁵
‘I will not stick your word(s) into my mouth.’
‘I will not repeat your words.’

eṇ tol kaviṇ tolaiyiṇum tolaika cāra **viṭēen** (narr.350:4, 6)
 [viṭu ‘to let go, allow’; **viṭēen** < viṭu + ēn]
‘Even if my nurtured/innate loveliness is lost, I will not let (you) come close.’

⁵ Note that **māṭṭēn** follows the infinitive form of a verb to signify negation in modern Tamil: e.g., **colla māṭṭēn** ‘I will not say.’

(bare stem + glide + ēn)

avar cūlvatai evaṇ kol **ariyēn** (kali.4:11, 12)

[**ari** ‘to know’; **ariyēn** < **ari** + glide **y** + **ēn**]

‘What is he planning? **I do not know.**’

(bare stem ± glide + **al** + **ēn**)

avaṇ **maravalēnē** piṛar **uḷḷalēnē** (puṛa.395:32)

[**maṛa** ‘to forget’; **uḷḷu** ‘to remember, think’;

maravalēn < **maṛa** + glide **v** + **al** + **ēn**;

uḷḷalēn < **uḷḷu** + **al** + **ēn**]

‘**I will not forget him; I will not think** of others.’

(non-past stem + **al** + **ēn**)

uyartiṇai ūmaṇ pōla t tuyar **porukkallēn** tōḷi (kuru.224:5-6)

[**poru** ‘to tolerate, bear with’; **porukkallēn** < **porukk** + **al** + **ēn**]

‘My friend, **I cannot bear with** the distress like a mute person.’

(non-past stem + **al** + **ēn**)

aḥtu **arikalēn** yāṇē (narr.206:11)

[**ari** ‘to know’; **arikalēn** < **arik** + **al** + **ēn**]

‘**I cannot** (possibly) **know** that.’

(non-past stem + **al** + **ēn**)

mārpil ... yāṇ cārātu **amaikallēn** (kali.104:65-66)

[**amai** ‘to stay undisturbed’; **amaikallēn** < **amaik** + **al** + **ēn**]

‘**I cannot stay calm** without leaning on (his) chest.’

(past stem + **il** + **ēn**)

nalaṇum iḷantāl ivaḷ eṇṇum takkavir pōlum **iḷantilēn** maṇṇō
(kali.146:18-19)

[**iḷa** ‘to lose’; **iḷantilēn** < **iḷant** + **il** + **ēn**]

‘You seem to be the people who are saying “She lost her well-being too.” Certainly, **I have not lost** (it).’

ai: (2nd person singular)

(bare stem + **al** + **ai**)

peyal kaṇ maṛaittalīṇ vicumpu **kāṇalaiyē** (*kuṛu.355:1*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇalai** < **kāṇ** + **al** + **ai**]

‘Since the rain covers the area, **you do not see** the sky.’

‘Since the rain covers your eyes, **you do not see** the sky.’

(non-past stem + **al** + **ai**)

pakaivarkku aṇci p paṇintu **oḷukalaiyē** (*matu:201*)

[**oḷu** ‘to conduct oneself, behave’; **oḷukalai** < **oḷuk** + **al** + **ai**]⁶

‘**You will not** be afraid of your enemies and **behave** obediently.’

(past stem + **il** + **ai**)

evaṇkol eṇṇu niṇaikkalum **niṇaittilai** (*narr.297:5*)

[**niṇai** ‘to think’; **niṇaittilai** < **niṇaitt** + **il** + **ai**]

‘**You do not** even **think** “What is it?”’

ōy: (2nd person singular)

(bare stem + glide + **āt** + **ōy**)

ariyaḷ ākutaḷ **aṛiyātōyē** (*kuṛu.120:4*)

[**aṛi** ‘to know, understand’; **aṛiyātōy** < **aṛi** + **y** + **āt** + **ōy**]⁷

‘**You do not understand** that she is hard (to be obtained).’

⁶ Some might consider **oḷuku** to be the stem.

⁷ It could be interpreted as a participial noun in this context.

m⁸: (3rd person neuter plural)

(bare stem + **m**)

icaiyum in̄pamum ītalum mūn̄rum acaiyuṭaṇ iruntōrkku arum puṇarvu
in̄m (*narr.214:1-2*)

[il ‘to be non-existent; to be absent’; **in̄m** < il + **m**]

‘The rare combination of the three, namely, fame, pleasure, and beneficence, **does not exist** for those who stay around (at home) with laziness.’

⁸ It occurs only after il ‘to be non-existent.’

PAST PARTICIPIAL NOUNS

GENERAL: The finite verb form that refers either to the doer or the object of the action indicated by the verb is here called the “participial noun.” More specifically, when a finite verb form is used like a noun, it is referred to as a “participial noun.”¹ A participial noun can be interpreted as “X who/which is/was/were verb(s/ed/en),” where “X” is denoted by the PNG suffix in the participial noun and “verb” is the verb underlying the participial noun. The participial noun functions like any other nominal in that it can be declined. There is no formal difference between a finite verb and a participial noun except in some cases where the affixes attached to the stem are different for participial nouns. Technically, any finite verb can function as a participial noun and therefore in classical Tamil, many such verb forms provide two interpretations, one as a finite

¹ Traditional grammarians and commentators refer to the participial noun as **vinaiyāl aṇaiyum peyar** ‘noun embraced by an action’ (Nagṇūl, Rule 285), **vinaiṇṇepayar** ‘action noun’ (the Old Commentary on *pati.13:1, 2, 4, 6*), or **tolirpeyar** ‘action noun’ (the Old Commentary on *pati.19:19*).

verb and the other as a participial noun. Context alone determines the meaning in such cases.

Two basic types of participial nouns are found in classical Tamil: affirmative and negative. See “Negative Participial Nouns” for information about the negative type.

FORMATION: Past participial nouns are derived by suffixation. A participial noun suffix indicating the person-number-gender of the doer or the experiencer of the action is added to the past/completive stem of the verb. In some cases, **an**, **in**, or **icin** is added to the past/completive stem before adding the participial noun suffix.²

See “The Past Stem” and “Person-Number-Gender” for information on the past/completive stem and the PNG categories.

PNG for affirmative past participial nouns

1st person singular: **en**, **ēn**

1st person plural/honorific: **am**, **ām**, **ēm**

2nd person singular: **āy**, **ōy**

2nd person plural/honorific: **avir**, **ir**, **ī(i)r**

3rd person masculine singular: **an**, **avan**, **ān**, **ōn**

3rd person feminine singular: **aval**, **aḷ**, **āl**, **ōḷ**

3rd person human plural/honorific: **avar**, **ar**, **ār**, **ōr**

3rd person neuter singular: **atu**, **atai**

3rd person neuter plural: **a**, **avai**

² For a discussion of **an**, **in**, and **icin**, see “Notes on Miscellaneous Items.”

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

past/completive stem ± an/in/icin + PNG³

PNG Structure and Example

a: (3rd person neuter plural)

(past/completive stem + glide + a)

irantōr **vēṇṭiya** koṭuttu (*kuru.349:5-6*)

[**vēṇtu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭiya** < **vēṇṭi** + glide y + a;

vēṇṭiya is the object.]

‘giving **what** the suppliants **wished for**’

(past/completive stem + an + a)

māṇṭana pala (*pati.19:27*)

[**māṇ** ‘to be perfect, elegant’; **māṇṭana** < **māṇṭ** + an + a]

‘(the places) **which were elegant** were many’

(past/completive stem + glide + in + a)

kūntal **orīyina** pōla ... mālaikkaṇ (*pati.21:33-34, 35*)

³ Some might prefer to separate the initial **a** from the suffixes **avir**, **avan**, **aval**, **avar**, **atai**, and **avai**, and consider it as part of the stem: e.g., **turaṇṭavar** ‘he who has renounced’ < **turaṇṭa** (past adjectival participle) + **ar** PNG or **turaṇṭa** (past adjectival participle) + **avar** ‘that person’ instead of **turaṇṭ** (past/completive stem) + **avar** PNG. But note that in non-past participial nouns, the adjectival participle form could not be identified as the stem. For example, in **iruppavar** ‘those who remain/stay’, ***iruppa** is not non-past adjectival participle and therefore we cannot derive **iruppavar** from ***iruppa** + **ar** or ***iruppa** + **avar**. Therefore, I have settled for **irupp** (non-past/non-completive stem) + **avar** PNG which can be considered similar to **turaṇṭ** (past/completive stem) + **avar** PNG in structure.

[**oru** ‘to move away’; **orīiyina** < **orīi** + glide **y** + **in** + **a**]

‘compassionate eyes **which** appear as if they **moved away** from the tresses’

atu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(past/completive stem + **atu**)

kāl yāttatu (*peru:133*)

[**yā** ‘to bind’; **yāttatu** < **yātt** + **atu**; **yāttatu** is the object]

‘... **which was bound** to a post’

kuppai vēlai uppili ventatai (*cīru:137*)

[**ve** ‘to steam up, boil; **ventatai** < **ventatu** + **ai** (case marker)

ventatu < **vent** + **atu**; **ventatai** is the object]

‘the **vēlai** leaves **which boiled** without salt’

‘the **vēlai** leaves **which were cooked** without salt’

(past/completive stem + glide + **atu**)

nin uḷḷiyatu muṭittōy (*pura.211:9-10*)

[**uḷḷu** ‘to think, intend’; **uḷḷiyatu** < **uḷḷi** + glide **y** + **atu**; **uḷḷiyatu** is the object]

‘you who accomplished **what** you **intended**’

atai: (3rd person neuter singular)

(past/completive stem + **atai**)

ūrntatai ... pukaḷ cāl vēlam (*pari.21:1, 2*)

[**ūr** ‘to ride’; **ūrntatai** < **ūrnt** + **atai**; **ūrntatai** is the object]

‘**What** you **rode** was a famous elephant.’

am: (1st person honorific/plural)

(past/completive stem + **an** + **am**)

yām umakku c **cīrantanam** ātal aṛintanir āyiṇ (kali.5:4-5)

[**cīra** ‘to be dear/indispensable’; **cīrantanam** < **cīrant** + **an** + **am**]

‘if you know that **we are** (people who are) **dear** to you’

ar: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(past/completive stem + glide + **ar**)

pirital **valliyar** ... nattuṛantōr (aka.223:1)

[**val** ‘to be capable’; **valliyar** < **valli** + glide **y** + **ar**]

‘He who renounced us **is one who is capable of** being separated.’

(past/completive stem + **in** + **ar**)

vēṇṭupa vēṇṭupa **vēṇṭinarkku** aruḷi (peru:444)

[**vēṇṭu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭinar** < **vēṇṭi** + **in** + **ar**]

‘bestowing upon **those who wanted** whatever they wanted’

avar: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(past/completive stem + **avar**)

naḷ eṇ kaṅkul naṭuṅku tuṇai āyavar niṇ maṛantu uṛaital yāvatu

(aka.129:2-3)

[**ā** ‘to be’; **āyavar** < **āy** + **avar**]

‘How could **he, who was** (your) companion at those times of shivering/trembling in the thick of the night, stay (away) forgetting you?’

tuṛantavar āṇṭu āṇṭu uṛaikuvar kollō

(kali.36:21)

[**tuṛa** ‘to renounce, relinquish’; **tuṛantavar** < **tuṛant** + **avar**]

‘Will he, **who has renounced** me, stay around here and there (away from me)?’

naṭṭavar kuṭi uyarkkuvai (*matu:131*)

[**naṭ** ‘to befriend’; **naṭṭavar** < **naṭṭ** + **avar**]

‘You will uplift the clans of **those who have befriended** you.’

avaḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(past/completive stem + **avaḷ**)

nin̄ t̄imai **kāttavaḷ** (*kali.44:19*)

[**kā** ‘to protect, shield’; **kāttavaḷ** < **kātt** + **avaḷ**]

‘**she who prevented** the harm to you’

‘she who protected you from harm’

avan: (3rd person masculine singular)

(past/completive stem + **avan**)

varuvaṇ̄ en̄ra kōṇatu perumaiyum atu paḷutu in̄ri **vantavan** aṇivum
(*pura.217:7-8*)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vantavan** < **vant** + **avan**]

‘the greatness of the king who said, “He will come” and the wisdom of **the one who came** without failing’

avir: (2nd person plural)

(past/completive stem + **avir**)

cāṇravir ... en̄ tuyar nilai t̄irttal num talai k kaṭaṇē
(*kali.139:33, 36-37*)

[**cāl** ‘to be noble’; **cāṇravir** < **cāṇr** + **avir**]

‘**Noble** people, it is your primary duty to remove the state of my distress.’

kaṇṭavir ellām katum eṇa vantānkē paṇṭu ariyātīr pōla nōkkuvīr
(*kali.140:1-2*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see, notice’; **kaṇṭavir** < **kaṇṭ** + **avir**]

‘All those who noticed me have come here and are looking at me as if you do not know me from the past.’

avai:

(2nd person singular)

(past/completive stem + **avai**)

māṇu amar aṭṭavai (*pari.21:66*)

[**aṭu** ‘to kill’; **aṭṭavai** < **aṭṭ** + **avai**]

‘You are the one who killed the enemies in the war.’

(3rd person neuter plural)

(past/completive stem + glide + **avai**)

varai mutal citariyavai (*aka.108:3*)

[**citaṛu** ‘to scatter’; **citariyavai** < **citaṛi** + glide **y** + **avai**]

‘those which scattered on the top of the mountain’

an: (3rd person masculine singular)

(past/completive stem + **in** + **an**)

mutu pārppāṇ aṇcinan ātal aṛintu (*kali.65:20*)

[**aṇcu** ‘to fear’; **aṇcinan** < **aṇci** + **in** + **an**]

‘knowing that the old brahmin is a frightened man’

ām: (1st person plural/honorific)

(past/completive stem + **ām**)

puṇarntām pōla uṇarnta neṇcamoṭu (*narr.349:4*)

[**puṇar** ‘to unite’; **puṇarntām** < **puṇarnt** + **ām**]
 ‘with a heart that feels as if **we were** (people who were) **united**’

āy: (2nd person singular)

(past/completive stem + **āy**)

muṇṇattān onru **kuṛittāy** pōl kātṭinai (kali.61:7)

[**kuṛi** ‘to intend, aim for’; **kuṛittāy** < **kuṛitt** + **āy**]

‘You made a hint like **someone who had intended** something.’

(past/completive stem + glide + **āy**)

nīnka k **karutiyāykku** ... tuyar uḷappavō (kali.136:15, 16)

[**karutu** ‘to intend, propose’]

karutiyāykku < **karuti** + glide **y** + **āy** + **kku** (case marker)]

‘Would she have to suffer on behalf of / in response to **you who intended to leave?**’

ār: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(past/completive stem + **ār**)

nalkūrantār celva makal (kali.50:14)

[**nalkūr** ‘to suffer’; **nalkūrantār** < **nalkūrnt** + **ār**]

‘the dear daughter of **those who have suffered**’

(**nalkūr** is probably from ***nali** ‘suffering’ + **kūr** ‘to intensify’)

(past/completive stem + **in** + **ār**)

onrinār vāḷkkaiyē vāḷkkai (kali.18:11)

[**onru** ‘to unite, co-operate’; **onrinār** < **onri** + **in** + **ār**]

‘Only the life of **those who are harmoniously united** is (true) life.’

āl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(past/completive stem + āl)

īnrāṭku oru peṇ ivaḷ (pari.8:58)

[**īn** ‘to give birth’; **īnrāṭku** < **īnrā** + **ku** (case marker);

īnrā < **īnr** + **āl**]

‘She is the only daughter of the **woman who gave birth** to her.’

ān: (3rd person masculine singular)

(past/completive stem + ān)

pakai il nōy **ceytān** ... malai (kali.40:6)

[**cey** ‘to make, do’; **ceytān** < **ceyt** + **ān**]

‘the mountain that belongs to **him who created** a non-hostile sickness’

‘the mountain that belongs to him who gave me lovesickness’

(past/completive stem + glide + ān)

kaṭṭiyārku yāṅku ākuvam kol (narr.313:5-6)

[**kaṭi** ‘to avoid, renounce’; **kaṭṭiyārku** < **kaṭṭiyān** + **ku** (case marker);

kaṭṭiyān < **kaṭi** + glide **y** + **ān**]

‘Where will we be for him **who has renounced** us?’

‘He has renounced us. Now, where do we stand?’

(past/completive stem + glide + **in** + ān)

evvam **urṭiyinān** kuṇṇu (kali.42:24)

[**uru** ‘to experience’; **urṭiyinān** < **urṭi** + glide **y** + **in** + **ān**]

‘the hill of the **man who caused** us grief’

ir: (2nd person honorific/plural)

(past/completive stem + **an** + **ir**)

curam collātu irappa t **tuṇintanirkku** oru poruḷ colluvatu uṭaiyēṇ
(*kali.8:6-8*)

[**tuṇi** ‘to decide, dare’;

tuṇintanirkku < **tuṇintanir** + **kku** (case marker);

tuṇintanir < **tuṇint** + **an** + **ir**]

‘I have one thing to say to you **who have decided** to go through the forest without telling (us).’

ī(i)r⁴: (2nd person plural/honorific)

(past/completive stem + **īr**)

palcānīrē palcānīrē (*puṛa.195:1*)

[**cāl** ‘to be noble, be abundant’; **cānīr** < **cānr** + **īr**]

‘O you **who are full of many** virtues.’

(past/completive stem + glide + **īir**)

yārīrō em **vilāṅkiyīir** (*aka.390:14*)

[**vilāṅku** ‘to intercept, cross’; **vilāṅkiyīir** < **vilāṅki** + glide **y** + **īr**]

‘Who are **you who intercepted** us?’

(The vowel in the PNG is lengthened because the participial noun is in the vocative case.)

en: (1st person singular)

(past/completive stem + **ēn**)

niṇ āṭu koḷ viyaṇ mārpū **toḷutanen** paḷicci c celval ... yāṇē

⁴ The **īr** is a variant of **ir**.

(pura.211:15-17)

[tolu 'to worship'; tolutanen < tolut + an + en]'I shall leave, as **one who has worshipped** your wide triumphant chest.'**ēm**: (1st person honorific/plural)(past/completive stem + **ēm**)ali perrēm emmai nī aruliṇai

(kali.66:22)

[peru 'to get, obtain'; perrēm < perr + **ēm**]'You showed compassion to us **who obtained** your sympathy.'**ēn**: (1st person singular)(past/completive stem + **ēn**)tantai taṇ ūr ituvē īnrēn yāṇē

(narr.198:11-12)

[īn 'to give birth'; īnrēn < īnr + **ēn**]'This is her father's town. **I am the one who gave birth** to her.'(past/completive stem + **ēn**)arattotu ninrēnai k kaṇṭu

(kali.39:20)

[nil 'to stand, stay'; ninrēn < ninr + **ēn**;ninrēnai < ninrēn + ai (case marker)]'looking at me **who stood** in the path of duty'(By literary convention, **arattotu nil** means "to inform the mother about the love between her daughter and her lover." It is the duty or virtue [**aram**] of the female companion of the daughter to undertake this task.)

(past/completive stem + **an** + **ēn**)

niṇṇai t **takaittanēn** allal kāṇ (kali.108:20)

[**takai** ‘to stop, check’; **takaittanēn** < **takaitt** + **an** + **ēn**]

‘Look at the grief of me **who stopped** you (from going away from me).’

‘Look at my grief, who stopped you.’

ōy: (2nd person singular)

(past/completive stem + **ōy**)

tīṅku ceytaṇaiyē īṅku **vantōyē** (aka.112:8)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vantōy** < **vant** + **ōy**]

‘**You who came** here, you have done harm.’

(past/completive stem + glide + **ōy**)

kuṛa p piṇā k koṭiyai k **kūṭiyōy** (pari.19:95)

[**kūṭu** ‘to unite’; **kūṭiyōy** < **kūṭi** + glide **y** + **ōy**]

‘O you, **who united** with a vine-like Kuṛava woman (Vallī).’

ōr: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(past/completive stem + **ōr**)

paṇmalai **īrantōrkku** (aka.101:17)

[**īra** ‘to cross over, pass’; **īrantōr** < **īrant** + **ōr**]

‘to him **who passed** many mountains’

(past/completive stem + glide + **ōr**)

nīrum nilaṇum **puṇariyōr** īṇṭu uṭampum uyirum paṭaitticiṇōrē

(puṛa.18:22-23)

[**puṇar** ‘to join’; **puṇariyōr** < **puṇari** + glide **y** + **ōr**]

‘Those who have joined the water and the land are those who (in fact) have created bodies and lives here (on earth).’

(past/completive stem + **icin** + **ōr**)

tāam tēralar kollō cēynāṭṭu ... **iranticiṇōrē** (*narr.302:6-10*)

[**ira** ‘to cross over’; **iranticiṇōr** < **irant** + **icin** + **ōr**]

‘Is he not sure ... **who has crossed over** to a faraway country?’

nīrum nilaṇum puṇariyōr iṇṭu uṭampum uyirum **paṭaitticiṇōrē**

(*pura.18:22-23*)

[**paṭai** ‘to create’; **paṭaitticiṇōr** < **paṭaitt** + **icin** + **ōr**]

‘Those who have joined the water and the land are **those who** (in fact) **have created** bodies and lives here (on earth).’

(past/completive stem + **in** + **ōr**)

ceṛu tī neṇcattu c **cinam niṭiṇōr**

(*pari.5:73*)

[**niṭu** ‘to last, extend’; **niṭiṇōr** < **niṭi** + **in** + **ōr**]

‘people in whose heart of destructive fire **fury has lasted**’

ōl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(past/completive stem + **ōl**)

kaṇṇu puku mālai **ninrōl** eyti

(*aka.9:20*)

[**nil** ‘to stand, wait’; **ninrōl** < **ninr** + **ōl**]

‘reaching her **who is standing** (waiting for me) in the evening when the calves enter (the village)’

(past/completive stem + **icin** + **ōl**)

varuntinaḷ aḷiyaḷ nī **pirinticiṇōlē**

(*kuṛu.336:6*)

[**piri** ‘to separate from’; **pirinticiṇōl** < **pirint** + **icin** + **ōl**]

‘She, **from whom** you are separated, felt sad. She is to be pitied.’

ōn: (3rd person masculine singular)

(past/completive stem + **ōn**)

kaṭavuḷ pēṇiyar **uyarntōn** ēntiya arum peṛal piṇṭam (*pati.30:34-35*)

[**uyar** ‘to be noble, lofty in principles’; **uyarntōn** < **uyarnt** + **ōn**]

‘the morsel, rare to be obtained, which **the noble one** carried (high in his hands) for worshipping god’

(past/completive stem + glide + **ōn**)

nerunai em muṇ **tappiyōn** tampiyotu ... nāḷai c ceykuvan amar

(*puṛa.304:4-5, 6*)

[**tappu** ‘to wrong’; **tappiyōn** < **tappi** + glide **y** + **ōn**]

‘I shall wage war with the younger brother of the **man who wronged** my older brother yesterday.’

NON-PAST PARTICIPIAL NOUNS

GENERAL: See “Past Participial Nouns” for more general information on participial nouns. The non-past participial noun can be construed as either a “present” participial noun or as a “future” participial noun; the context helps in deciding which is appropriate.

FORMATION: Non-past/non-completive participial nouns are derived by suffixation. A participial noun suffix indicating the person-number-gender of the doer or the experiencer of the action is added directly to the non-past/non-completive stem or is preceded by *āḷ* ‘person’ or *an*.¹

See “The Non-past Stem” and “Person-Number-Gender” for information on the non-past/non-completive stem and the PNG categories.

PNG for non-past/non-completive participial nouns

1st person singular: **en**, **ēn**

1st person plural/honorific: **am**, **ām**, **ēm**

¹ For a discussion of the affix *an*, see “Notes on Miscellaneous Items.”

2nd person singular: **āy, i, ai, ōy**

2nd person plural/honorific: **īr**

3rd person masculine singular: **avan, an, ān, ōn**

3rd person feminine singular: **avaḷ, aḷ, āḷ, i, ōḷ**

3rd person human plural/honorific: **ar, avar, ār, ārkaḷ, ōr**

3rd person neuter singular: **atu, i**

3rd person neuter plural: **a, avai**

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

non-past/non-completive stem ± **an/āḷ** + PNG

PNG Structure and Example

a: (3rd person neuter plural)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **a**)

torutta vayal āral **pirāḷnavum** ēru poruta ceṟu ulātu **vittunavum**

(*pati.13:1-2*)

[**pirāḷ** ‘to wallow’; **vittu** ‘to sow’; **pirāḷna** < **pirāḷn** + **a**;

vittuna < **vittun** + **a**; **vittuna** is the object]

‘manured fields **where the āral fish wallow**; and, the muddy land **where seeds are sown** without tilling the soil (that) the oxen stampeded’

neytal iruṅkaṇ erumaiyiṇ nirai **taṭukkunavum**

(*pati.13:3-4*)

[**taṭu** ‘to put up an obstacle or barrier’; **taṭukkuna** < **taṭukkun** + **a**]

‘the dark eye-like neytaal flowers **which block** the water-buffaloes’

ō maṇantu aṇu kuḷam **niṇaikkuna** pōla alkalum aḷutal mēvala āki
(aka.11:12-14)

[**niṇai** ‘to fill up’; **niṇaikkuna** < **niṇaikkun** + **a**]

‘like the sluices **which**, forgetting to be shields, **are filling up** the drying pond, (my eyes) have come to shed tears every day and ...’

am maṇal vaṭu t tūra **varippa pōl** īṅkai vāṭu utirpu uka (kali.31:2-3)
[**vari** ‘to decorate by lining up’; **varippa** < **varipp** + **a**]

‘the wilting īṅkai flowers fall and scatter as if **they line up** filling the dips on the soft sand’

vēṇṭupa vēṇṭupa vēṇṭinarkku aruḷi (peru:444)

[**vēṇṭu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭupa** < **vēṇṭup** + **a**; **vēṇṭupa** is the object]

‘providing/bestowing **whatever was wished for** upon those who wanted’

nāvāy **tōṇruva** kāṇāmō (aka.110:18-19)

[**tōṇru** ‘to appear’; **tōṇruva** < **tōṇruv** + **a**; **tōṇruva** is the object]

‘Don’t we see the boats **which appear** (on the horizon)?’

(non-past/non-completive stem + **an** + **a**)

uṭaṅku **koṭpana** pōl pukuttaṇar toḷūu (kali.105:22)

[**koḷ** ‘to spin’; **koṭpana** < **koṭp** + **an** + **a**]

‘They made the bulls enter the stall like things/animals **which spin all together.**’

ari paripu **aruppana** (kali.103:24)

[**aru** ‘to cut, sever, tear’; **aruppana** < **arupp** + **an** + **a**]

‘bulls **which pull and tear up** the intestines of their enemies’

vaṇappu uṛa k **koḷvaṇa** nāṭi aṇintaṇaḷ (kali.82:19)

[**koḷ** 'to take hold, accept'; **koḷvaṇa** < **koḷv** + **aṇ** + **a**;

koḷvaṇa is the object]

'She looked for (ornaments) **which are proper** for attaining beauty and wore them.'

atu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **atu**)

nallatu ceṭtal āṛṛiṛ āyiṇum allatu ceṭtal ōmpumiṇ atuṭāṇ ellārum

uvappatu (pura.195:6-8)

[**uva** 'to rejoice, enjoy, like'; **uvappatu** < **uvapp** + **atu**;

uvappatu is the object]

'Even if you are not able to do good, retreat from doing (things) which are not good. That indeed is **what is liked** by everyone.'

uṇpatu nāḷi uṭuppavai iraṇṭē (pura.189:5)

[**uṇ** 'to consume, eat'; **uṇpatu** < **uṇp** + **atu**; **uṇpatu** is the object.]

'**What one eats** is (equal to the measure of) a nāḷi. What one wears is only two (pieces of clothing).'

cellunarkku **uṛuvatu** kūṛum ... palliya kāṭu (aka.151:12-13, 15)

[**uṛu** 'to occur, befall'; **uṛuvatu** < **uṛuv** + **atu**]

'The forest has geckos which tell those who pass by **what will befall**.'

(non-past/non-completive stem + glide + **atu**)

taṇ kaṇ kaṇṭatu **poykkuvatu** aṇṛē (kuru.26:5)

[**poy** 'to lie, fail'; **poykkuvatu** < **poykku** + glide **v** + **atu**]

‘It (the monkey) is not something **which will lie** about what its eyes saw.’

‘It (the monkey) will not lie about what it witnessed.’

cēmtaṇai celiṇē **citaikuvatu** uṇṭō (aka.120:13)

[**citai** ‘to smash/destroy’; **citaikuvatu** < **citaiku** + glide **v** + **atu**]

‘Is there anything **that will be destroyed** if you stay over and leave (later)?’

am: (1st person plural)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **am**)

ceṇmō peruma em viḷavu uṭai nāṭṭu eṇa yām **taṇ aṛiyunam** āka

(pura.381:5-6)

[**aṛi** ‘to know’; **aṛiyunam** < **aṛiyun** + **am**]

‘As we **informed** him “We shall now go to our festive country,” ...’

‘As we said to him “We shall now go to our festive country” and **waited to know his response**, ...’

ar: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ar**)

aruḷa vallai ākumati aruḷ ilar koṭāmai **vallar** ākuka ... niṇ pakai

etirntōrē (pura.27:17-18, 19)

[**val** ‘to be capable, be skilled’; **vallar** < **val** + **ar**]

‘May you become one who is skilled in giving. May those who are facing your enmity become **those skilled** in not giving.’

kaviḷnta maṇṭai **malarkkunar** yār (pura.103:3)

[**malar** ‘to unfold, turn up’; **malarkkunar** < **malarkkun** + **ar**]

‘Who are the people **who will turn up** our (begging) bowls which are upside down (now).’

ār añar uṇunar aru niṇam cuṭṭi k kūr eḷku **eṇiñar** (aka.71:11-12)

[**eṇi** ‘to fling, toss’; **eṇiñar** < **eṇiñ** + **ar**]

‘the people **who throw** sharp spears pointing to the dear chest of those who are already experiencing harsh grief ‘

pāṭunarkku oṇṇu **īkunarum** illai (pura.235:17)

[**pāṭu** ‘to sing’; **ī** ‘to bestow’; **pāṭunar** < **pāṭun** + **ar**;

īkunar < **īkun** + **ar**]

‘There is no one **who would give** to those who sing.’

kāṇunar vayāam kaṭku iṇ cēyārriṇ (malai:476)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇunar** < **kāṇun** + **ar**]

‘of the river, pleasing to the eyes, which comes from a distance and which **those who look at it** will desire’

‘of the river, pleasing to the eyes, which comes from a distance and will be liked by those who desire it’

ār añar **uṇunar** aru niṇam cuṭṭi k kūr eḷku **eṇiñar** (aka.71:11-12)

[**uṇu** ‘to experience’; **uṇunar** < **uṇun** + **ar**]

‘the people who throw sharp spears pointing to the dear chest of those **who are** already experiencing harsh grief ‘

aṇainar tīm piḷi entiram (pati.19:22-23)

[**aṇai** ‘to grind’; **aṇainar** < **aṇain** + **ar**]

‘the mill where people, **who grind**, extract the sweet (juice of sugarcane)’

naṛavu uṇ vaṇṭāy narampu **uḷarnar** (pari.9:63)

[**uḷar** ‘to pluck’; **uḷarnar** < **uḷarn** + **ar**]

‘those who **pluck** the strings (of the harp) like bees feeding on honey’

tirumaṇi **kuyinar** (matu:511)

[**kuyil** ‘to bore’; **kuyinar** < **kuyiln** + **ar**]

‘those who **bore** lustrous gems’

poṇ urai **kāṇmar** (matu:513)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see, witness, examine’; **kāṇmar** < **kāṇm** + **ar**]

‘those who **examine** the rubbing of gold (on a special stone, for estimating it)’

nacaivar (puṛa.229:25)

[**nacai** ‘to like, desire’; **nacaivar** < **nacaiṽ** + **ar**]

‘those who **like** ...’

(non-past/non-completive stem + **aṇ** + **ar**)

viraivaṇar kātalar **pukutara** (kali.134:26)

[**virai** ‘to rush’; **viravaṇar** < **viraiv** + **aṇ** + **ar**]

‘as her lover arrived (as **someone who was**) **hurried**’

‘as her lover arrived **hurriedly**’

(non-past/non-completive stem + glide + **āḷ** + **ar**)

em kuḷici malarkkum kaṭaṇ **aṛiyāḷar** piṛa nāṭṭu iṇmaiṇ

(puṛa.393:4-5)

[**aṛi** ‘to know’; **aṛiyāḷar** < **aṛi** + glide **y** + **āḷ** + **ar**]

‘since **those who know** the duty of turning up our pots (for giving alms) do not exist in other countries’

‘since there is none in other countries who knows the duty of turning up our pots for giving alms’

avar: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **avar**)

maṇai vayiṇ **iruppavar** (aka.389:10)

[iru ‘to remain’; **iruppavar** < **irupp** + **avar**]

‘those who remain in the house’

atari **koḷpavar** (matu:94)

[koḷ ‘to take hold, grasp, carry’; **koḷpavar** < **koḷp** + **avar**]

‘those who take (hold of) the hay’

avaḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **avaḷ**)

ūṭu meṇ ciṟu kiḷi **uṇarppavaḷ** (kali.72:4)

[uṇar ‘to understand, reconcile’; **uṇarppavaḷ** < **uṇarpp** + **avaḷ**]

‘she who is coaxing the sulking little parrot’

yāṇ ākiyar niṇ neṇcu **nērpavaḷē** (kuru.49:5)

[nēr ‘to fit, be right for, be proper’; **nērpavaḷ** < **nērp** + **avaḷ**]

‘May I be the one who is / will be suitable for your heart!’

avan: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **avan**)

am malai eṭukkal cellātu **uḷappavan** (kali.38:4-5)

[uḷa ‘to struggle’; **uḷappavan** < **uḷapp** + **avan**]

‘one who is struggling without being able to lift that mountain’

varaipavaṇ eṇṇiṇ akalāṇ (kali.146:27)
 [varai ‘to delimit, choose’; **varaipavaṇ** < **varaip** + **avan**]
 ‘the **one who has chosen** me (for marrying) will not go away from me’

avai: (3rd person neuter plural)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **avai**)

uṇpatu nāḷi **uṭuppavai** iraṇṭē (pura.189:5)
 [**uṭu** ‘to wear, wrap around’; **uṭuppavai** < **uṭupp** + **avai**;
uṭuppavai is the object]
 ‘What one eats is (equal to the measure of) a nāḷi. **What one wears** is only two (pieces of clothing).’

urukupavai pōl eṇpu kuḷir koḷi (poru:78)
 [**uruku** ‘to melt’; **urukupavai** < **urukup** + **avai**]
 ‘like things which are melting/loosening, the bones were cold and ...’
 (The reference is to the shivering due to the cold.)

aḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **aḷ**)

neṭuñcuḷi nittam **maṇṇunaḷ** pōla (aka.62:10)
 [**maṇṇu** ‘to clean by washing’; **maṇṇunaḷ** < **maṇṇun** + **aḷ**]
 ‘she, like **someone who is washing up** in the water with wide ripples’

nīḷi nakar ... **ninaiyunaḷ** vatintakkāl (kali.126:14)
 [**ninaḷ** ‘to think’; **ninaiyunaḷ** < **ninaiyun** + **aḷ**]

‘when she stayed in her big house (as someone who is) **thinking** (about you)’

‘when she stayed in her big house thinking (about you)’

av icai muḷai ēṟru aḷaiṭṭuḷi c **celkuvaḷ** āṅku t tamar k kāṇāmai
mīṭciyum kūu k kūu mēvum (pari.19:63-65)

[**cel** ‘to go’; **celkuvaḷ** ‘she who goes’ < **celkuv** + **aḷ**]

‘The hill is such that she resorts to calling out to her kin again and again without finding them **when she goes** (looking for them) since the caves echoed her call.’

(non-past/non-completive stem + **an** + **aḷ**)

iṇaiyaṇa tīmai **nīṇaivaṇaḷ** kāttu (kali.44:18)

[**nīṇai** ‘to think’; **nīṇaivaṇaḷ** < **nīṇaiv** + **an** + **aḷ**]

‘she prevented this kind of harm as **someone who would think** about it (before hand) and ...’

‘she prevented this kind of harm, having sensed/thought about it and ...’

an: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **an**)

niṇ **veyyan** āyiṇ avaṇ veyyai nī āyiṇ (kali.107:21)

[**vey** ‘to like’; **veyyan** < **vey** + **an**]

‘if **he is someone whom** you like and you are someone whom he likes’

kāṭu muṇṇiṇaṇē kaḷ **kāmuṇaṇ** (pura.238:5)

[**kāmuṇu** ‘to experience desire’ < **kām** + **uṇ**;

kāmuṇaṇ < **kāmuṇ** + **an**]

‘**he who desired toddy** intended / thought of the forest’

puravu **etirkoḷvaṇai** k kaṇṇaṇam varaṇku (pati.57:15)

[**etirkoḷ** ‘to receive, anticipate’ < **etir** + **koḷ**;

etirkoḷvaṇ < **etirkoḷv** + **aṇ**]

‘in order to return after seeing the **one who anticipates** to protect (the suppliants)’

(non-past/non-completive stem + **aṇ** + **aṇ**)

koḷuṅkuṇai ... **viraivaṇaṇ** cuṭṭu ... tiṇm eṇa t tarutaliṇ

(pura.150:9, 12, 13)

[**virai** ‘to rush, hurry’;

viraivaṇaṇ ‘one who rushed’ < **viraiv** + **aṇ** + **aṇ**]

‘since he baked a fat piece of animal flesh as **someone in a hurry** and gave it to us saying “Eat,” ... ’

‘since he baked a fat piece of animal flesh in a hurry and gave it to us saying “Eat,” ... ’

ām: (1st person honorific/plural)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ām**)

aiyaṇai **ēttuvām** pōla

(kali.43:5)

[**ēttu** ‘to praise’; **ēttuvām** ‘those who praise’ < **ēttuv** + **ām**]

‘like those who praise the Lord/Chief’

āy: (2nd person singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **āy**)

vaḷaṅkā p poḷutu nī kaṇṇu **mēyppāy** pōl vaḷaṅkal (kali.112:12-13)

[**mēy** ‘to graze’; **mēyppāy** < **mēypp** + **āy**]

‘moving around like **someone who is grazing** the calves at a time when no one moves around’

ār: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ār**)

yāḷiṇ puri **nekiḷppār** (pari.18:36-37)

[**nekiḷ** 'to loosen'; **nekiḷppār** < **nekiḷpp** + **ār**]

'those who loosen the twist of the harp's strings'

emmai p purappēm **enpār**um palarāl (kali.94:24-25)

[**en** 'to say'; **enpār** < **enp** + **ār**]

'There are many who say that they will protect us.'

nuntai nalaṇ uṇa c cāay c **cāaymār** evva nōy (kali.80:16-17)

[**cāy** 'to suffer, wither, cave in';

cāaymār < **cāaym** + **ār** < **cāym** + **ār**]

'the painful (love)sickness of women who are withering since your father enjoyed their loveliness'

viḷiyā viruntu **viḷuvār**kku koytōy taḷir (pari.6:61-62)

[**viḷu** 'to desire'; **viḷuvār** < **viḷuv** + **ār**]

'You picked tender leaves for those who desired an endless feast.'

aṛivār yār avar muṇṇiyavvē (narr.269:9)

[**aṛi** 'to know, realize'; **aṛivār** < **aṛiv** + **ār**]

'Who are the people who know what he intended?'

(non-past/non-completive stem + **an** + **ār**)

kālai āvatu aṛiyār mālai **enmanār** mayañkiyōrē (kali.119:15-16)

[**en** 'to say'; **enmanār** < **enm** + **an** + **ār**]

'Those who say that it is evening, not knowing that it is morning, are confused.'

ār(kal): (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ār[ka]**)

vālvārkaṭku

(*kali.145:17*)

[**vā**] ‘to live’; **vālvārkaṭku** < **vālvārka** + **ku** case marker;

vālvārka < **vālv** + **ārka**]

‘for **those who are living/thriving**’

(Note the two plural suffixes, **ār** and **ka**.)

āl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **āl**)

paital nōy **ulappālai** ... nīṅkīṇrāl pacappē

(*kali.130:18, 21*)

[**ula** ‘to struggle’; **ulappā** < **ulapp** + **āl**]

‘Lovesick pallor left her **who is struggling** through lovesickness.’

nī emmai eḷḷutal maṇaittal ōmpu **enpālai** ... avan ... uṇarppittal

(*pari.18:9-10, 13*)

[**en** ‘to say’; **enpā** < **enp** + **āl**]

‘cajoling **the woman who says** to him “Avoid hiding (the fact) that you despise us” ’

araṅkiṇ mēl **āṭuvāl** aṇi nutal

(*kali.79:4*)

[**āṭu** ‘to dance’; **āṭuvāl** < **āṭuv** + **āl**]

‘beautiful forehead of the **woman who is dancing** on a stage’

ān: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ān**)

putu nāṇ **nuḷaippān** nuti māṇ vaḷ ukir

(*kuṟu.67:3*)

[**nuḷai** ‘to enter’; **nuḷaippān** < **nuḷaipp** + **ān**]

‘sharp nails with fine tips of **the man who threads** a new string
(through a gold coin)’

urṛāriṇ nīṅkalam **enpān** malai (kali.40:28-29)

[**en** ‘to say’; **enpān** < **enp** + **ān**]

‘the mountain which belongs to **him who says** “We shall not go
away from our kin” ’

aṇṇai ... cēri am peṇṭir ciṟu col nampi c **cuṭuvān** pōla nōkkum
(narr.175:5, 7-8)

[**cuṭu** ‘to burn’; **cuṭuvān** < **cuṭuv** + **ān**]²

‘Believing the mean words of the neighborhood women, mother
looks at me like **someone who would burn** (me) **up**.’

i:

(2nd person singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + i)

em uyir uṭampu **aṭuvi** (aka.136:19)

[**aṭu** ‘to kill, destroy’; **aṭuvi** < **aṭuv** + **i**]

‘**you who are killing** my life-breath and body’

² An interesting example. Probably the form **ān pōl** (or **ārpōl**), as found here in the example **cuṭuvān pōl**, is the source for the modern Tamil usage **ārpōl** ‘like, as if’ which has many variations **āl pōla**, **āppōla**, and **āppla** (in fast spoken Tamil). In modern Tamil, this **ārpōl** is added to a past or a non-past stem, for example, **avar vantārpōla t terikīratē** ‘It seems he came’; **ava aṅke pōrāppala ille** (spoken Tamil) ‘It doesn’t seem like she is going to go there.’

(3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **i**)

kaṅkul uyavu t tuṇai ākiya tuñcātu **uraivi** ival (aka.298:22-23)

[**urai** ‘to stay’; **uraivi** < **uraiv** + **i**]

‘She is someone who has become my concerned companion at night and **who stays** without sleeping.’

(3rd person neuter singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **i**)

cāntārri pōla (pari.21:30)

[**ārru** ‘to make dry, cool off’; **ārri** < **ārru** + **i**; **cāntu** ‘sandal paste’]

‘like the thing/fan **which dries off** the sandal paste’

īr: (2nd person plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **īr**)

varuvīr uḷīrō (kuru.118:4)

[**var** ‘to come’; **varuvīr** < **varuv** + **īr**]

‘Are there any **who would** (like to) **come** (inside the house)?’

en: (1st person singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **en**)

vā eṇa k **kūruven** pōla k kātṭi marṛu avan mēe vaḷi mēvāy neñcē (kali.47:22-24)

[**kūru** ‘to state’; **kūruven** < **kūruv** + **en**]

‘My heart, guide (him) like me **who would tell him** to come (for a rendezvous) and then go wherever he goes.’

(non-past/non-completive stem + **an** + **en**)

yāṇ taṇ karaiya vantū **viraivanen** kavaii ... nāṇi niṇṇōl
(aka.16:13-14, 16)

[**virai** ‘to rush, hurry’; **viraivanen** < **viraiv** + **an** + **en**]

‘she, who stood feeling bashful when she came (up to me) as I called, and hugged me **who rushed** (to hug her)’

ēm: (1st person plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ēm**)

kaṇṇōṭu **celvēṁ** em tāmpin oru talai paṇṇai (kali.116:1-2)

[**cel** ‘to go’; **celvēṁ** < **celv** + **ēm**]

‘You have grabbed one end of the rope that belongs to us **who are going** with our calves.’

ēn: (1st person singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ēn**)

eṇ nalam tārāyō eṇa t **toṭuppēn** pōla (kali.128:10-11)

[**toṭu** ‘to hug, fasten, hook’; **toṭuppēn** < **toṭupp** + **ēn**]

‘as if **I would confront** (him) and say, “Won’t you give (back) my loveliness?”’

pala nāl āṇ iruḷ varutal **kāṇpērku** yāṅku ākummē ilaṅkiḷai ceṇippē
(narr.332:8-10)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇpēn** < **kāṇp** + **ēn**;

kāṇpērku < **kāṇpēn** + **ku** case marker]

‘How is it possible for me, **who witness** his arrival during many difficult nights, to have tight ornaments?’

(The literary convention is that the woman’s ornaments will become loose because she would grow thin in distress if there is any danger to her lover while coming at night to see her.)

yāṇ ākuval niṇ nalaṇ taruvēṇē (aka.392:28)

[tar ‘to give, bring’; taruvēṇ < taruv + ēṇ]

‘I shall be the one **who will bring** back your loveliness.’

ai: (2nd person singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + ai)

niṇ veyyaṇ āyiṇ avaṇ veyyai nī āyiṇ (kali.107:21)

[vey ‘to like’; veyyai < vey + ai]

‘If he is someone whom you like and you are **someone whom he likes**, ...’

aruḷa **vallai** ākumati aruḷ ilar koṭāmai vallar ākuka ... niṇ pakai
etirtōrē (pura.27:17-18, 19)

[val ‘to be capable, be skilled’; vallai < val + ai]

‘May **you** become one **who is skilled** in giving. May those who are facing your enmity become those skilled in not giving!’

pakaivar paṇintu tiṇai pakara k **koḷḷunai** ātalīṇ (pati.17:2-3)

[koḷ ‘to take hold, receive, accept’; koḷḷunai < koḷḷun + ai]

‘since you are **someone who accept** it as (and when) your enemies submit to you and announce their tribute’

‘since you accept it as (and when) your enemies submit to you and announce their tribute’

ōy: (2nd person singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + ōy)

maṇaivi mel iṇai p paṇaittōḷ tuyil **amarpōyē** (narr.121:11-12)

[amar ‘to settle’; amarpōy < amarp + ōy]

‘O **you who settle** in sleep on the edge/curve of your wife’s gentle firm shoulder’

porul vayiṇ celvōy uraṇ uṭai uḷḷattai (kali.12:9-10)

[cel 'to leave for a destination'; celvōy < celv + ōy]

'O, you who are leaving to seek wealth, you have a heart of determination.'

ōr: (3rd person human plural/honorific)

(non-past/non-completive stem + ōr)

eṇ iraval maṇṭai malarppōr yār (puṛa.179:2-3)

[malar 'to unfold, turn upside'; malarppōr < malarpp + ōr]

'Who is the person who will turn my begging bowl upside?'

nōṟṟōr maṇṭa tōḷi ... pirintu uṛai kātalar vara k kāṇpōrē

(kuru.344:1, 8)

[kāṇ 'to see, witness'; kāṇpōr < kāṇp + ōr]

'They are definitely fortunate, my friend, those who will see the return of their lovers who are away.'

yāṇē aṇṇiyum uḷar kol ... nōkku arum ciṛu neṛi niṇaiyumōrē

(narr.104:8, 12)

[niṇai 'to think'; niṇaiyumōr < niṇaiyum + ōr]

'Are there any aside from me, who would think of the small path (through which my lover comes) that is difficult to see?'

tēṟṟām ... kaṇ kaliḷ uku paṇi arakkuvōrē (kuru.398:1, 8)

[arakku 'to rub, press'; arakkuvōr < arakkuv + ōr]

'We do not know of someone who would wipe the tears that fill my eyes and fall down.'

nirai māṭam ūrkuvōr

(pari.10:27)

[ūr 'to climb up'; ūrkuvōr < ūrkuv + ōr]

'those who climb up the row of balconies'

yāṅku aṛintaṇar ... tōḷi ... pirintu cēṇ uṛaital **valluvōrē**

(*kuṛu.154:1, 8*)

[**val** 'to be capable'; **valluvōr** < **valluv** + **ōr**]

'How did he know to be **someone capable** of living far away, being separated from me?'

'How is he capable of living far away, being separated from me?'

vaḷḷaṇmaiṇ em **varaivōr** yār

(*puṛa.393:6*)

[**varai** 'to choose, select'; **varaivōr** < **varaiv** + **ōr**]

'Who are the people **who would choose** (to protect) us out of philanthropy?'

'Who would choose (to protect) us out of philanthropy?'

ōḷ: (3rd person feminine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ōḷ**)

uḷaiyam ākavum **inaivōḷ** piḷaiyalal ... piritum nām eṇiṇē

(*aka.5:27-28*)

[**inaḷ** 'to suffer'; **inaivōḷ** < **inaiv** + **ōḷ**]

'**She who is suffering**, although we (hon.) are close by, will not survive if we depart.'

kaṭaloṭu **pulampuvōḷ** kalaṅku aṇar

(*kali.144:68*)

[**pulampu** 'to cry'; **pulampuvōḷ** < **pulampuv** + **ōḷ**]

'the agitated distress of **the woman who cries** out to the sea'

ōṇ: (3rd person masculine singular)

(non-past/non-completive stem + **ōṇ**)

nīyē muṇ yāṇ **aṛiyumōṇē**

(*puṛa.137:4*)

[**aṛi** 'to know'; **aṛiyumōṇē** < **aṛiyum** + **ōṇ**]

'You are **the (only) one whom I knew** before / in the past.'

NEGATIVE PARTICIPIAL NOUNS

GENERAL: See “Past Participial Nouns.” The negative participial noun does not refer to a specific time. Therefore, there is only one type of negative participial noun as the counterpart of the past and the non-past affirmative participial nouns.

FORMATION: Negative participial nouns are formed by suffixation:

- (i) a PNG suffix beginning with a long vowel is added directly to the bare verb stem;
- (ii) **al** or **āt** is added to a bare verb stem and is subsequently followed by a PNG suffix;
- (iii) **al** is added to the non-past/non-completive stem ending with **(k)k** and is occasionally followed by **āt** and a PNG suffix or is directly followed by a PNG suffix;
- (iv) **il** is added to the past/completive stem of a verb and is subsequently followed by a PNG suffix.

See “The Negative” for information on the negative participial nouns formed by using conjugated forms of the intrinsically negative root **al** ‘not to be __.’ See “The Past Stem” for information on the past stem, and “Person-Number-Gender” for the PNG categories.

PNG for negative participial nouns

- 1st person singular: **ēn**
- 1st person plural, honorific: **ām, ēm**
- 2nd person singular: **āy, i, ōy**
- 2nd person plural, honorific: **īr**
- 3rd person masculine singular: **avan, ān, ōn**
- 3rd person feminine singular: **āl, ōl**
- 3rd person human plural, honorific: **ar, avar, ār, ōr, mār**
- 3rd person neuter singular: **atu**
- 3rd person neuter plural: **a, ā**

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

- bare verb stem + PNG with a long vowel
- bare verb stem + **al** or **āt** + PNG
- non-past stem in **(k)k** + **al** ± **āt** + PNG
- past stem + **il** + PNG

PNG Structure and Example

a: (3rd person neuter plural)

(bare stem + **āt** + **a**)

ceyyāta colli c ciṇaval

(kali.81:27)

[**cey** ‘to do’; **ceyyāta** < **cey** + **āt** + **a**; **ceyyāta** is the object]
 ‘Do not be angry, saying **what** (I) **did not do.**’

atu: (3rd person neuter singular)

(bare stem + **āt** + **atu**)

niḷal pōl tiritaruvāy eṇ nī perātatu (*kali.61:8-9*)

[**peru** ‘to get, obtain’; **perātatu** < **peru** + **āt** + **atu**;
perātatu is the object]

‘You are wandering like (my) shadow. What is it **that** you **did not** get?’

ar: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(bare stem + **al** + **ar**)

onnalar eḷkuṭai valattar māvoṭu parattara (*pura.274:4-5*)

[**on** ‘to agree, unite, match’; **onnalar** (enemies) < **on** + **al** + **ar**]

‘those people **who are not agreeable** and who have the power of spears moved around with their horses, and ...’

poruntalar arimaṇa vāyil (*aka.266:12-13*)

[**poruntu** ‘to agree, match’;

poruntalar (enemies) < **poruntu** + **al** + **ar**]

‘(the place) Arimaṇa Vāyil that belongs to the people **who are not agreeable / who do not match**’

avar: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(bare stem + **āt** + **avar**)

tōḷ tuṇantu aruḷātavar pōl (*kali.128:1*)

[**aruḷ** ‘to be gracious, compassionate’;

aruḷātavar < **aruḷ** + **āt** + **avar**]

‘like the one **who is not compassionate** and has renounced (my) shoulders’

(non-past/non-completive stem + **al** + **āt** + **avar**)

collutal uṟṟu **uraikkallātavar**

(*kali.61:4*)

[**urai** ‘to state, declare, speak up’;

uraikkallātavar < **uraikk** + **al** + **āt** + **avar**]

‘those **who** felt like telling but **were not able to speak up**’

avan: (3rd person masculine singular)

(bare stem + **āt** + **avan**)

karai kāṇā nōyul **aḷuntātavan**ai p purai tava k kūṟi k koṭumai nuvalvīr
(*kali.146:25-26*)

[**aḷuntu** ‘to immerse’; **aḷuntātavan** < **aḷuntu** + **āt** + **avan**]

‘By saying (things) to destroy his greatness, you are talking about the cruelty of the man **who does not immerse himself** in (love)sickness that knows no bounds.’

ā(a):

(3rd person neuter singular)

(bare stem + **ā**)

uṭāa pōrā ākutal aṟintum paṭāam maññaikku ṭtta em kō

(*pura.141:10-11*)

[**uṭu** ‘to wear, wrap around’ **pōr** ‘to cover oneself with’

uṭāa < **uṭu** + **ā**; **pōrā** < **pōr** + **ā**]

‘our king who gave a shawl to the peacock although he knew that it is (a bird) **which would not wrap and cover** itself (with the shawl).’

(3rd person neuter plural)

(bare stem + glide + ā)

ovvā yā uḷa (*pura.167:9*)

[o 'to fit, be appropriate, agree, match'; **ovvā** < o + glide vv + ā]

'What are the things **which do not match** (you)?'

ām: (1st person honorific/plural)

(bare stem + ām)

alāam uraitalum uriyam (*aka.113:23*)

[aḷu 'to cry'; **alāam** (hon.) < aḷu + ām]

'We have a right to stay as **those who are not crying.**'

'I have a right to stay without crying.'

āy: (2nd person singular)

(bare stem + āt + āy)

eṇ naliyum nōy maṭamaiyāṇ **uṇarātāy** (*kali.58:11-12*)

[uṇar 'to understand'; **uṇarātāy** < uṇar + āt + āy]

'O you, **who do not understand** the (love)sickness that is hurting me.'

(non-past/non-completive stem + al + āy)

meyyai p poy eṇru mayāṅkiya kai oṇru **aṛikallāy** pōṛi kāṇ nī (*kali.95:25-26*)

[aṛi 'to know'; **aṛikallāy** < aṛik + al(l) + āy]

'See, you seem like someone **who** mistook false for truth and thus **do not know** about it.'

ār: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(bare stem + **ār**)

avar **poyyār** ākutaḷ teḷintaṇam (kali.150:21-22)

[**poy** ‘to lie, fail’; **poyyār** < **poy** + **ār**]

‘We are sure that he is **someone who would not lie.**’

eṇṇum cāṇṇōr cāṇṇōr pālar āpa **cālār** cālār pālar ākupavē

(puṛa.218:5-8)

[**cāl** ‘to be content, be noble’; **cālār** < **cāl** + **ār**]

‘Always, those who are content belong in the group of those who are content. **Those who are not content** belong in the group of those who are not content.’

kūṛṛattaiyai ākalin **pōṛṛār** iraṅka viḷivatu kollō (puṛa.98:17-18)

[**pōṛru** ‘to cherish, appreciate’; **pōṛṛār** < **pōṛru** + **ār**]

‘Since you are like Death, is there indeed (going to be) a pitiful destruction of **those who do not appreciate** you?’

onnār yāṇai ōṭai p poṇ koṇṭu

(puṛa.126:1)

[**on** ‘to agree, unite, match’; **onnār** (enemies) < **on** + **ār**]

‘taking hold of the gold from the elephants that belong to **those who would not agree**’

evvi ēval **mēvār** neṭu miṭal

(aka.266:11-12)

[**mēvu** ‘to take up, accept’; **mēvār** < **mēvu** + **ār**]

‘the long (standing) strength of **those who do not accept** (the chieftain) Evvi’s command’

(non-past/non-completive stem + āt + ār)

naḷḷātār miṭal cāytta vallāḷa (puṛa.125:5-6)

[**naḷ** ‘to befriend’; **naḷḷātār** < **naḷ** + **āt** + **ār**]

‘O capable one, who defeated the strength of those who did not befriend you.’

(past/completive stem + il + ār)

taṇ **tamiḷ āyvantilār** koḷḷār ik kuṇṇu payaṇ (paṛi.9:25-26)

[**āyvar** ‘to get close, to investigate’

< **āy** ‘to look into’ + **var** ‘to come’;

āyvantilār < **āyvant** + **il** + **ār**]

‘Those who have not investigated pleasant Tamil will not accept the result(s) of this (Paraṅkuṇṇu) hill.’

‘Those who do not understand the depth of Tamil will not appreciate the nature of this hill.’

āl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(bare stem + āt + āl)

nī nīppiṇ **vālātāl** mulai (kali.2:13-14)

[**vāl** ‘to live, prosper’; **vālātāl** < **vāl** + **āt** + **āl**]

‘breasts of the woman who would not live if you leave’

ān: (3rd person masculine singular)

(bare stem + ān)

aṛam cārān mūppē pōl alitakkāl (kali.38:19)

[**aṛam** ‘righteousness’; **cār** ‘to lean toward’; **cārān** < **cār** + **ān**]

‘she, who is perishing like the aging of a man who would not lean toward righteousness’

(bare stem + āt + ān)

or̥kattuḷ utaviyārkku utavātān (kali.149:6)

[utavu ‘to help’; utavātān < utavu + āt + ān]

‘the man who does not help those who helped (him) in poverty’

i: (2nd person singular)

(bare stem + i)

nāṇ ili nī (kali.116:17)

[nāṇ ‘shame, bashfulness’; ili < il ‘to be non-existent’ + i]

‘You are someone who do not have shame.’

īr: (2nd person honorific)

(bare stem + glide + āt + īr)

eṇ nīr aṛiyātīr pōla ivai kūral (kali.6:7)

[aṛi ‘to know, understand’; aṛiyātīr < aṛi + glide y + āt + īr]

‘your saying these things like someone who do not understand my nature’

‘you are saying these things as if you do not understand my nature’

ēm: (1st person honorific/plural)

(bare stem + ēm)

yām muntuṛutal cellēm ... curattu alkiyēm (aka.261:11-12)

[cel ‘to be possible to leave; to proceed’; cellēm < cel + ēm]

‘We, not being able to leave in a rush, stayed in the forest.’

‘Without proceeding further in a rush, we stayed in the forest.’

ēn: (1st person singular)

(bare stem + āt + ēn)

añcuvaru nōyoṭu tuñcātēnē (aka.45:19)

[**tuñcu** ‘to sleep’; **tuñcātēn** < **tuñcu** + **āt** + **ēn**]
 ‘I **who do not sleep** due to frightening (love)sickness.’

ōy: (2nd person singular)

(mutated stem + **āt** + **ōy**)

koṇkaṇai t **tārātōyē** (*aink.138:3*)

[**tār** < **tar** ‘to bring’; **tārātōy** < **tār** + **āt** + **ōy**]
 ‘you **who have not brought** the Koṇkaṇ (husband)’

ōr: (3rd person honorific/plural)

(bare stem + **āt** + **ōr**)

niṇ **uṇarātōrē** (*pati.51:24*)

[**uṇar** ‘to understand, reconcile’; **uṇarātōr** < **uṇar** + **āt** + **ōr**]
 ‘those **who do not understand/reconcile** with you’

iṇṇāy peruma niṇ **onnātōrkkē** (*puṛa.94:5*)

[**on** ‘to agree, unite’; **onnātōr** < **on** + **āt** + **ōr**]
 ‘You are not sweet, my lord, to **those who are not agreeable** to you.’
 ‘My lord, you are not sweet to your enemies.’

ōl: (3rd person feminine singular)

(bare stem + glide + **āt** + **ōl**)

kāntaḷ muḷu mutal ... il uyttu naṭutalum **kaṭiyātōlē** (*kuṛu.361:4, 6*)

[**kaṭi** ‘to avoid, prevent’; **kaṭiyātōl** < **kaṭi** + glide **y** + **āt** + **ōl**]
 ‘mother **who does not stop/prevent** (me from) bringing the whole root of the kāntaḷ (from his mountain) to (our) house and planting it even’

ōn: (3rd person masculine singular)

(bare stem + āt + ōn)

malai keḷīya nāṭu uṭaṇ koṭuppavum koḷḷātōnē (pura.232:5-6)

[koḷ ‘to take hold, receive, accept’; koḷḷātōn < koḷ + āt + ōn]

‘he who would not accept it even if (one) gives (him) the entire mountainous country.’

mār: (3rd person human plural)

(bare stem + al + mār)

maḷalir neytal kēḷanmār neṭuṅkaṭaiyānē¹ (pura.389:16, 17)

[kēḷ ‘to hear’]

‘The women in your large courtyard will be those who will not hear the (sound of the) neytal drum (that announces death).’

¹ My analysis of **kēḷanmār** slightly differs from the traditional analysis. For example, Cēṇāvaraiyar considers a similar form, **kāṇanmār** to be a negative personal verb meaning ‘they will not see’ (cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam: 135, Rule 207).

VERBAL NOUNS

GENERAL: The nominal form which is derived from a verb stem and which refers to the process/action or the result of the process/action is here called the “verbal noun.” This specification is made in order to differentiate the verbal noun from the participial noun which refers to the doer or object of the action.¹ As an example of a verbal noun referring to a process/action or the result of the latter, consider **uṇaṇkal** (< **uṇaṇku** ‘to dry up, be dehydrated’ + **al**): this can refer to the process of drying up, dehydration, or the neuter object which is dried up, “fish.” The literary context determines what **uṇaṇkal** refers to.

The verbal noun functions like any other nominal in that it can be declined. Two basic types of verbal noun are found in classical Tamil: affirmative and negative. See “Negative Verbal Nouns” for information on the negative type. Verbal nouns do not normally refer to a specific time.

¹ The traditional term for verbal noun is **tolirpeyar** ‘action-noun’ or **vinaiyiṇ peyar** ‘name of the action’ (Tolkāppiyam, eḷuttatikāram, Ḥampūraṇam, Rule 297; Naṇṇūl, Rule 286). Note that in the tradition the term **tolirpeyar** also refers to a participial noun (cf. commentary on *pati.19:17*).

However, there are a few verbal nouns which contain markers that indicate a completive or an incompletive aspect of the actions denoted by the verbs from which the verbal nouns are derived. The verbal nouns which indicate a completive aspect are here called the “past verbal nouns.” See “Non-Past Verbal Nouns” for information on the non-past verbal noun.

FORMATION: The verbal noun is derived in the following ways:

- (i) by using the bare verb stem;
- (ii) by stem mutation;
- (iii) by suffixation: adding a verbal noun suffix directly to the stem;
- (iv) by “extension”: using a past neuter singular finite verb form, or adding the suffix **tu**, **tai**, or **mai** to a past/completive adjectival participle;
- (v) by periphrasis: the affix **um** is added to a past neuter singular finite form of a verb and is subsequently followed by conjugated forms of the verbs **il** ‘not to be ...’ or **uṭai** ‘to have.’

Among these mechanisms, (ii) and (iii) can occur separately or together. See “The Past Adjectival Participle” for information on past adjectival participles. The verbal noun is treated like a neuter singular finite verb for syntactic purposes.

The affirmative verbal noun suffixes are: **am**, **ar**, **al**, **āl**, **u**, **uḷ**, **ai**, **kkaḷ**, **(k)ku**, **(k)kai**, **(c)ci**, **ccu**, **(t)tal**, **ti**, **tai**, **pāṭu**, **(p)pu**, **mai**, **vi**, **vu**, and **vai**. It is not possible to predict the distribution of these suffixes with the exception of **ttal** and **tal**: **ttal** occurs in transitive/effective verbs and **tal**, in non-causative/affective verbs.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: using bare verb stem

vaṛaṇ orīi **vaḷaṇku** vāyppa viṭumati (pura.382:15-16)
 [vaḷaṇku ‘giving, providing’ < vaḷaṇku ‘to provide’]
 ‘Let us go, so that scarcity moves away and our (act of) **giving**
 becomes true / a reality.’

paruntu **aruntu** urra tānai (pura.62:6)
 [aruntu ‘feeding’ < aruntu ‘to feed on’]
 ‘army which experienced **the eating** by the vultures’
 ‘dead army, eaten by the vultures’

avar nāṭu aḷiya eyil vauvi c curramoṭu **tū** aruttalin (matu:186-188)
 [tū ‘strength’ < tū ‘to be strong’]
 ‘since he besieged the (enemies’) fortress as their country perished
 and destroyed their **strength** along with their relatives’

irum iṭai miṭainta cila col (pura.243:13)
 [irum ‘cough; coughing’ < irum ‘to cough’]
 ‘the few words mixed with **coughing**’

Formation mechanism: stem mutation

- (a) In consonant-final stems, the stem-final consonant is normally hardened if it is not y, r, or v. And the short vowel in the monosyllabic stem is lengthened:²

² These are stems from Type (i) discussed in “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis.”

ūṭṭu aru marapiṇ aṇcuvaru pēeykku **ūṭṭu** etirkoṇṭa ... ṇimili
(aka.142:10-11)

[**ūṭṭu** ‘feeding’ < **uṇ** ‘to eat’]

‘(the chieftain) Ṇimili who voluntarily took on (a vow to perform) **the feeding** of frightening ghosts which, according to legend, are difficult to feed’

pūṭṭu aṇu vil (aka.96:2)

[**pūṭṭu** ‘holding, fastening’ < **pūṇ** ‘to fasten’]

‘bow whose **fastening** is cut off’

ivaṇ makaṇē tōli eṇṇaṇaḷ ataṇ aḷavu uṇṭu **kōḷ** mati vallōrkke
(aka.48:24-26)

[**kōḷ** ‘comprehension’ < **kōḷ** ‘to grasp, take, accept’]

‘She said, “My friend, he is (my) man.” Those who are skilled in judgement would have an **understanding** of the extent of this (statement).’

vaṭṭu **uruṭṭu** vallāy (pari.18:42)

[**uruṭṭu** ‘rolling’ < **uruḷ** ‘to roll’]

‘O you who are skilled in **rolling** marbles.’

- (b) Stems here are non-monosyllabic and end with **u**, while the disyllabic stem has a long vowel and/or a closed syllable. The last consonant is hardened/doubled in stems with open syllables, and subsequently the short vowel in the first syllable is lengthened in the disyllabic stem. The closing consonant in the penultimate syllable is hardened in stems which have a closed syllable.³

³ These are stems referred to as Type (iii) in “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis.”

taṇ mīṇ cūṭṭu (peru:282)
 [cūṭṭu ‘flesh, roasted over an open fire’ < cuṭu ‘to bake, barbecue’]
 ‘roasted fresh fish’

poy vaḷam pūttana pāṇā niṇ pāṭṭu (pari.18:20-21)
 [pāṭṭu ‘singing’ < pāṭu ‘to sing’]
 ‘Bard, an abundance of falsehood is spread in your singing.’
 ‘Bard, your songs are full of lies.’

tōḷ nekiḷntataṇ talaiyum māṛṛu ākiṇṛē ... naṭpē (kuru.377:2-3, 5)
 [māṛṛu ‘change, cure, remedy’ < māṛu ‘to change’]
 ‘Even when (my) shoulders have become weak, (his) friendship is
 a remedy.’

vaiyai p perukku (pari.7:60)
 [perukku ‘flooding’ < peruku ‘to flood, increase’]
 ‘the flooding in (river) Vaiyai’

mayakku orī (pura.362:11)
 [mayakku ‘confusion’ < mayaṅku ‘to be confused’]
 ‘moving away from confusion’

accu aṛṛu ēmam āki (pati.90:2)
 [accu ‘fear’ < aṇcu ‘to fear’]
 ‘Fear having been cut off; security coming into being, ...’

pakai ākiṇṛu avar nakai viḷaiyāṭṭē (kuru.394:6)
 [viḷaiyāṭṭu ‘play’ < viḷaiyāṭu ‘to play’]
 ‘His laughing / delightful play is becoming (a matter of) enmity.’

- (c) Stems here are monosyllabic or are disyllabic ending with **u**. The syllables are open and contain short vowels. The vowel in the first syllable is lengthened.⁴

yāṇ uḷ **nō** uraiṇṇa (narr.106:5)
 [**nō** ‘suffering’ < **no** ‘to suffer internally’]
 ‘as I spoke of my inner **suffering**’

mati **māru** ōrā naṇṇu uṇar cūlcci (malai:62)
 [**māru** ‘disagreement’ < **maru** ‘to disagree’]
 ‘planning which considers (his) wellbeing and does not think of (any) **disagreement** with (his) opinion’

piṇi **vīṭu** peṇka maṇṇavan (aiṇk.447:1)
 [**vīṭu** ‘freedom, liberation’ < **viṭu** ‘to let go, let loose, release’]
 ‘May the king attain **freedom** from (what is) binding (him now).’

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare verb stem + verbal noun suffix

mutated stem + verbal noun suffix

Suffix Structure and Example

am:

(mutated stem + **am**)

vevvar **ōccam** (pati.41:20)
 [**ōccam** < **ōcc(u)** + **am** < ***ōcu** ‘to surge, rise’ + **am**]
 ‘**the surge** of the heat (of war)’

⁴ These are stems from Type (ii) discussed in “Stem Classification on a Phonological Basis.”

terumaral **uyakkam** (pura.381:16)

[**uyakkam** < **uyakk(u)** + **am** < **uyaṅku** 'to wilt' + **am**]

'wilting due to wandering'

verram (matu:73)

[**verram** < **verr** + **am** < **vel** 'to conquer' + **am**]

'victory'

mūvarum kūṭi aracavai irunta **tōrram** (poru:54-55)

[**tōrram** < **tōrr(u)** + **am** < **tōṇru** 'to appear' + **am**]

'the appearance of all three (kings) being together in the royal court'

ar:

(bare stem + glide + **ar**)

vevvar ṭccam (pati.41:20)

[**vevvar** < **ve** 'be hot; steam up' + glide **vv** + **ar**]

'the surge of the heat (of war)'

al:

(bare stem + **al**)

keṭal arum tiruva (pura.366:17)

[**keṭal** < **keṭu** 'to perish, rot, spoil' + **al**; **tiruva** (vocative)]

'Prosperous one, difficult to perish.'

'Unperishing prosperous one.'

(derived stem + **al**)

kollai kural vāṅki īṇā malai vāṇar alla purintu **oḷukalāṇ** (kali.39:13-14)

[**oḷukal** < **oḷuku** 'to conduct oneself, behave' + **al**;

oḷuku < ***oḷu** + **ku** formative suffix]

'With their sheaves bent, the (millet) fields will not yield, since the people living on the mountain behave / live by doing things that are not good.'

avala maṛu cuḷi **maṛukaliṇ** tavalē naṇṛu maṇ *(pura.238:18-19)*
 [maṛukal < maṛuku ‘to go around in circles, whirl’ + al;

maṛuku < maṛu + ku formative suffix]

‘It is better indeed to perish instead of **whirling** in the ripples of a whirlpool of distress.’

(bare stem + glide + al)

ariyal ārkaiyar *(aka.184:14)*

[ariyal < ari ‘to brew’ + glide y + al]

‘those who drink **brewed toddy**’

maṛaval ōmpumati emmē *(aka.19:9)*

[maṛaval < maṛa ‘to forget’ + glide v + al]

‘Avoid **forgetting** us.’

(mutated stem + al)

niṇa c cuṛā aṇutta **uṇakkal** *(narr.45:6)*

[uṇakkal < uṇakk(u) + al < uṇaṇku ‘to dry up, dehydrate’ + al]

‘**dried** pieces of fleshy shark’

paci pōkkal *(pura.390:27)*

[pōkkal < pōkk(u) ‘to make go, remove’ + al;

< pō(ku) ‘to go’ + al < pō ‘to go’ + al]

‘**removing** the hunger’

veḷḷi veṇ kalattu **ūṭṭal** *(pura.390:18)*

[ūṭṭal < ūṭṭ + al < uṇ ‘eat’ + al]

‘**feeding** from white silver vessels’

ilampāṭu **akaṛṛal** *(pura.381:15)*

[akaṛṛal < akaṛṛ + al < akal ‘to move away’ + al]

‘**removing** (our) state of having nothing’

āl: It is a variant of **al**.

(bare stem + **āl**)

pālum **koļāl**um vallōy (pati.16:19)

[**koļāl** < **koļ** 'to receive, take hold of' + **āl**]

'You are skilled in both sharing and **taking hold / grasping**.'

u: Stems that take this suffix are disyllabic with open syllables, end in **u**, and have **r** or **l** preceding the stem-final **u**.

(bare stem + **u**)

kuļūu k kaļiṛṛu (puṛa.97:9)

[**kuļūu** 'crowd' < **kuļu** 'to crowd as a group' + **u**]

'of a **crowd** of male elephants'

uļ:

(bare stem + glide + **uļ**)

vēy p peyal **viļaiyuļ** tēkkaļ tēral (malai:171)

[**viļaiyuļ** < **viļai** 'to mature' + glide **y** + **uļ**]

'sweet thin toddy, poured inside a (piece of) bamboo and **matured**'

ai:

(bare stem + **ai**)

vēñil ōti p pāṭu **naṭai** vaļalai (narr.92:2)

[**naṭai** < **naṭa** 'to walk, move around' + **ai**]

'the slippery chameleon **moving** with difficulty in the summer'

kkal:

(bare stem + **kkal**)

oru kāl viral muṛai cuṛri **mōkkal**um mōntaṇaṇ (kali.54:7-8)

[**mōkkal** < **mō** 'to sniff' + **kkal**]

‘He wound one string (of flowers) properly around his finger and even had a **sniff**.’

inmai uraittārkkū atu **nīraikkal** āṟṟākkāl (kali.43:26)

[**nīraikkal** < **nīrai** ‘to fill up, fulfill’ + **kkal**]

‘when (he is) not able to bring **fulfillment** for those who spoke of their having nothing’

(k)ku:

(bare stem + **kku**)

tolīṟ **cerukku** aṇantar (aka.37:6)

[**cerukku** < **ceru** ‘to exult’ + **kku**]

‘drowsiness due to the **exultation** of work’

(bare stem + **ku**)

iralai ... **melkiṭu** kavuḷa (aka.34:4, 8)

[**melkiṭu** < **melku** ‘cud’ + **iṭu** ‘to drop’;

melku ‘that which was chewed’ < **mel** ‘to chew’ + **ku**]

‘deer whose mouths **drop the cud**’

(k)kai:

(bare stem + **kkai**)

uyar ciṇai muṭai nacai **irukkai** p peṭai (aka.51:3-4)

[**irukkai** < **iru** ‘to be, remain’ + **kkai**]

‘the female (bird) **sitting** on a high branch with a desire for flesh’

(bare stem + **kai**)

tīrkai viṭukkum paṇpu (pura.391:9)

[**tīrkai** < **tīr** ‘to end, leave, vanish’ + **kai**]

‘the nature of giving up (the idea of) **vanishing**’

cārikai maṟuttu t taṇṭā **uṇṭikai** (pari.6:36)

[**uṇṭikai** ‘crowd, lump’ < **uṇṭai** + **kai**;

uṇṭai ‘globe, sphere’ < **uruṇṭai**

< **uruḷ** ‘to become round, globular’ + **tai**]

‘unrestrained **crowd** (of elephants and horses) which gave up moving on’

(bare stem + **i** + **kai**)

cārikai maṟuttu t taṇṭā **uṇṭikai** (pari.6:36)

[**cārikai** ‘moving on’ < **cār** ‘to lean, move on’ + **i** + **kai**]

‘unrestrained crowd (of elephants and horses) which gave up **moving on**’

(mutated stem + **i** + **kai**)

kārikai nīr nōkkinai (pari.7:65)

[**kārikai** < **kār** ‘dark’ (< **karu** ‘to be dark’) + **i** + **kai**]⁵

‘the glance that has the quality of **being dark**’

‘the glance of brown eyes’

(c)ci:

(bare stem + **cci**)

mati māṟu ōrā naṇṟu uṇar **cūlcci** (malai:62)

[**cūlcci** < **cū** ‘to plan’ + **cci**]

‘planning which considers (his) wellbeing and does not think of disagreement with (his) **opinion**’

⁵ Note that in later Tamil, **kārikai** refers to a woman, probably to a dark one, by metonymy.

(bare stem + **ci**)

vēru al **kāṭci** iruvēm

(*aka.73:9-10*)

[**kāṭci** < **kāṇ** ‘to see, view’ + **ci**]

‘we two with **views** that are not different’

ccu:

(bare stem + **ccu**)

cāṭiyiṇ **valaiccu** ara viḷainta ... naṟum piḷi

(*peru:280, 281*)

[**valaiccu** < **valu** ‘be tender, slimy’ + **ccu**]

‘good smelling extract/liquor that matured in a jar without being **slimy**’

(t)tal:

(bare stem + **ttal**)

neṭum perum kuṇṇam emmoṭu **iṟattal**

(*aka.19:5-6*)

[**iṟattal** < **iṟa** ‘to pass’ + **ttal**]

‘**passing beyond/through** the tall big hill with us’

(bare stem + **tal**)

taṇ citaivu **aṟital** aṇci ... eṇ makaḷ i-c-curam paṭartantōḷē

(*aka.7:9, 12-13*)

[**aṟital** < **aṟi** ‘to know’ + **tal**]

‘Afraid of me **knowing** about her blemish, my daughter proceeded to this forest.’

ti:

(bare stem + **ti**)

koṇṭi uṇṭi

(*peru:454*)

[**koṇṭi** < **koḷ** ‘to take hold of, grab’ + **ti**]

‘food/consumption made out of **looting**’

niṇ ārvalar toḷuta kai **amaitiyiṇ** amarntōyum nīyē (pari.4:70-71)

[**amaiti** < **amai** ‘to settle, stay undisturbed’ + **ti**]

‘You are the one who sat/settled in an **undisturbed state** of the worshipping hands of your devotees.’

venriyoṭu vil alaittu uṇṇum val āṇ vāḷkkai (aka.31:12-13)

[**venri** < **vel** ‘to conquer, defeat’ + **ti**]

‘life of skilled men who eat **successfully** by hustling with their bows’

tai:

(bare stem + **tai**)

pulavar ... nāvil puṇainta naṇ **kavitai** (pari.6:7, 8)

[**kavitai**

< **kavi** ‘to overspread, inundate, surpass, extend’ + **tai**]⁶

‘the good **spontaneity**/poetry of the poets’

(mutated stem + **tai**)

muṭantai nel (pati.29:3)

[**muṭantai** < **muṭam** + **tai** < **muṭa** ‘to be bent, crooked’ + **am** + **tai**]

‘paddy (sheaves) which **are bent**’

pāṭu: This is not a suffix. It is a verbal noun meaning ‘experience’ derived from the verb **paṭu** ‘to befall, experience.’ It is added like a suffix to a nominal stem to derive a larger verbal noun.

(bare stem + **pāṭu**)

nī cellā viṭuvāyēl ... neṭṭirum kūntal kaṭavuḷar ellārkkum **muṭtuppāṭu**

ākalum uṇṭu

(kali.93:33, 35-36)

⁶ Compare **kaviṇ** ‘fascinating beauty; abundance of beauty.’

[**muṭṭuppāṭu** ‘obstacle’

< **muṭṭu** ‘to knock against something’ + **pāṭu**]

‘If you do not go, **an obstacle** might arise for all those goddesses with long dark tresses.’

(derived stem + **pāṭu**)

oṇ cuṭar **vaḷappāṭu**

(*pari.2:64*)

[**vaḷappāṭu** < **vaḷam** ‘abundance’ + **pāṭu**]

‘the **abundance** of bright flames’

(mutated stem + **pāṭu**)

ilampāṭu akaṛṛal

(*pura.381:15*)

[**ilampāṭu** < **ilam** ‘absence’ + **pāṭu**;

il ‘to be non-existent, absent’ + **am** + **pāṭu**]

‘removing (our) **state of having nothing**’

(p)pu:

(bare stem + **ppu**)

maṛappu iṇṇu

(*pura.381:24*)

[**maṛappu** < **maṛa** ‘to forget’ + **ppu**]

‘without **forgetting**’

(bare stem + **pu**)

nam **piripu** aṇiyā ... naṇṇōl

(*aka.41:11, 12*)

[**piripu** < **piri** ‘to separate self’ + **pu**]

‘lovely shoulders/arms which do not know **separation** from us’

mai:

(bare stem + **mai**)

ceḷunakar naṭuvaṇ **aṭumai** y eḷunta aṭu ney āvuti

(*pati.21:12-13*)

[**aṭumai** < **aṭu** ‘to cook, kill’ + **mai**]

‘smoke that arose from the offering of ghee (to the gods) in the center of the wealthy house due to **cooking**’

ēḷaittanmai

(*kali.55:23*)

[**ēḷaittanmai**

< **ēḷai** + **tanmai** (**tan** oblique of **tān** ‘self’ + **mai** ‘ness’)]

‘the nature of being poor’

vi:

(bare stem + **vi**)

vēḷvi murriya ... vēntē

(*pura.26:15*)

[**vēḷvi** < **vēḷ** ‘to wish for’ + **vi**]

‘O king who have completed/accomplished (your) **wish**.’

‘O king who completed the Vedic sacrifice.’

vu:

(bare stem + **vu**)

ampu **kaḷaivu**

(*pati.24:13*)

[**kaḷaivu** < **kaḷai** ‘to remove’ + **vu**]

‘removal of the arrows’

vai:

(bare stem + **vai**)

vēyvai kāṇā viruntin pōrvai

(*pura.369:20*)

[**vēyvai** < **vēy** ‘to bend, warp’ + **vai**]

‘new face of the harp (pōrvai) which does not know (any flaw due to) **bending**’

Formation mechanism: Extension — using a past neuter singular finite verb form; or adding **tu**, **tai**, or **mai** to a past/completive adjectival participle. This type of verbal noun can be construed as the “past verbal noun.”

Suffix Structure and Example

(a)tu:

(past/completive stem + **atu**)
or (past adjectival participle + **tu**)

inīṭākīṇrāl ... nī vantu **nīnratu** (aka.184:4, 19)

[**nīl** ‘to stand’]

‘Your coming and **standing** (there) have become (a) pleasant (matter).’

‘It is nice that you came and stood (there).’

(a)tai:

(past/completive stem + **atai**)
or (past adjectival participle + **tai**)

tēṇṇiya ciṇṇappāṇrō ... nirai vaḷai **nekiḷntatai** (kali.132:13, 15)

[**nekiḷ** ‘to loosen’]

‘The (reason for the) **looseness** of the row of (my) bangles is the excellence of his reassurance, is it not?

‘The reason my bangles are loose is that he reassured me nicely but did not keep his promise, is it not?’

puruvattu k karu val kantattāl tāñki iv ulakam tantu **aṭippaṭuttatai**
 naṭuvaṇ ṭñkiya palar pukaḷ kuṇṇiṇōṭu okkum (*pari.4:22-24*)

[**aṭippaṭu** ‘to fall at someone’s feet’

< **aṭi** ‘feet’ + **paṭuttu** ‘to cause X to fall at Y’]

‘Causing the world to be at (your) feet (when it was immersed in the flood) in the past by bringing it (back) carrying it on (your) strong dark nape, is similar to (the act of) the tall (Mēru) mountain which emerged from the flood and is praised by many.’

mai:

(past adjectival participle + **mai**)

pīlāittamai ‘wrong doing’

(*aka.366:15*)

[**pīlāittamai** ‘wrong doing’

< **pīlāitta** adjp of **pīlai** ‘to wrong’ + **mai**]

Formation mechanism: Periphrasis

past/completive stem + **an/in** + **tu** + **um/ō**

um or **ō** is added to the neuter singular finite form of a verb, and the **u** in **tu** is morphophonemically deleted from the structure — past/completive stem + **an/in** + **tu** + **um/ō**. This structure is invariably followed by conjugated forms of the verbs **uṭai** ‘to have, be with’ or **il** ‘to be non-existent, absent.’ This type of verbal noun can be construed as the “past verbal noun.”

Structure and Example

(past/completive stem + **an** + **tu** + ... **ō ilam**)

muṇitaku paṇpu yām **ceytanrō ilamē**

(*aka.101:18*)

[**cey** ‘to do’; **ceytanrō** < **ceytanru** ‘the act of doing’ + **ō** (particle)

ceytanru < **ceyt** + **an** + **tu**; it is like **ceytatu** ‘the act of doing’]

‘We have not done anything that has the nature of being frustrated about.’

(past/completive stem + **an** + **tu** + **um** + **ilan**)

ilamaiyiṇ **ikantanrum ilanē** vaḷamaiyiṇ taṇ nilai **tīrntanrum ilan**
(*kuri*:244-245)

[ika ‘to despise, move away’; **tīr** ‘to swerve, deviate from, depart, vanish’

ikantanrum < **ikant** + **an** + **tu** + **um**;

tīrntanrum < **tīrnt** + **an** + **tu** + **um**]

‘He has not despised (us) because of his youth; **neither has he swerved** from his (normal) state because of (the abundance of) his wealth.’

(past/completive stem + **in** + **tu** + **um** + **ilan**)

eṇ vayiṇ colla **vallirrum ilanē** (*aka*.32:14-15)

[**val** ‘be capable’; **vallirrum** < **valli** + **in** + **tu** + **um**]

‘He was not able to speak out to me either.’

(past/completive stem + **in** + **tu** + **um** + **ilai**)

nīṭiṇar eṇṇum pulavi uṭkoṇṭu **ūṭinrum ilaiyō** (*narr*.237:4-5)

[**ūṭu** ‘to sulk’; **ūṭinrum** < **ūṭi** + **in** + **tu** + **um**]

‘Have you not been sulking either, holding back within yourself the anger that he has delayed (to return)?’

(past/completive stem + **in** + **tum** + **uṭai**)

emmoṭu varutiyō ... eṇa k **kūrinrum uṭaiyar** (*narr*. 274:6-7)

[**kūru** ‘to say, state’; **kūrinrum** < **kūri** + **in** + **tu** + **um**]

‘He even said “Will you come with me?” ’

NON-PAST VERBAL NOUNS

GENERAL: Verbal nouns do not normally indicate any specific time. A few verbal noun forms conclusively indicate a completive or incompletive aspect of the actions indicated by the verbs from which the verbal nouns are derived.¹ Among them, the non-past verbal noun form can be construed as signifying the present or the future. Context determines whether this verbal noun is to be understood as present or future. See also “Verbal Nouns,” and the chapters on participial nouns and “The Non-Past Stem.”

FORMATION: The non-past verbal noun is derived by suffixation: **atu** or **atai** is added to a non-past/non-completive stem that ends with **(p)p** or **v**. Alternatively stated, a non-past neuter participial noun in **atu** or **atai** is used. This type of verbal noun, which bears a similarity to the

¹ E.g., vantu **ninratu** ‘waiting; having arrived’ (*narr.*229:11), **varuvatu** ‘that which will come/happen’ (*pura.*366:12), **kilippatu** ‘the tearing’ (*aka.*72:1).

participial noun, is sometimes used to convey the sense of a neuter singular personal verb. An example is given below.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: non-past/non-completive stem + **atu** or **atai**

Suffix Structure and Example

atu:

(non-past/non-completive stem + **atu**)

iruḷ **kiḷippatu** pōḷ miṇṇi (aka.72:1)

[**kiḷi** ‘to tear’; **kiḷippatu** < **kiḷipp** + **atu**]

‘lightning as if **tearing** the sky’

iravu k **kāṇpatu** pōla p perum kaṭal ōta nīr vīṅkupu karai cēra (kali.134:5-6)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see; look at’; **kāṇpatu** < **kāṇp** + **atu**]

‘the big ocean’s foamy water swelled up and reached the shore as if the night (opened its eyes and) was **looking**’

varuvatu nāṭi (pura.366:12)

[**var** ‘to come, arrive, happen’; **varuvatu** < **varuv** + **atu**]

‘seeking / looking for **what is coming** / about to happen’

vicumpu **urivatu** pōḷ viyal iṭattu oḷuki maṅkul mā maḷai tenpulam
paṭarum paṇi irum kaṅkul (aka.24:7-9)

[**uri** ‘to peel’; **urivatu** < **uriv** + **atu**]

‘cold dark midnight, when the dark rain cloud is moving southward in the vast space as if the sky is **peeled**’

muṭintatum **muṭivatum mukilppatum** avai mūṇrum (pari.13:46)

[**muṭi** ‘to come to an end’; **mukil** ‘to emerge, bud’

muṭivatu < **muṭiv** + **atu**; **mukilppatu** < **mukilpp** + **atu**]

‘those three such as that which has ended, **that which is coming to an end**, and **that which will emerge**’

iṇimai evaṇ **ceyvatu** poymmoḷi emakkē (aka.6:22)

[**ceyvatu** ‘the doing’ (verbal noun) < **cey** ‘to do’]

‘What sweetness **will** (your) false words **do** for me?’

(Note that the verbal noun is used to convey the sense of a finite verb meaning ‘will do.’)

atai:

(non-past/non-completive stem + **atai**)

iṇṇātē ... kaḷiṇu iyaṅku āriṭai iṇku nī **varuvatai** (kali.49:19, 21)

[**var** ‘to come, arrive’; **varuvatai** < **varuv** + **atai**]

‘Your **arrival** through the difficult forest, where male elephants move around, is not pleasing.’

NEGATIVE VERBAL NOUNS

GENERAL: See “Verbal Nouns.”

FORMATION: Negative verbal nouns are formed by suffixation, by first adding **ā** to the bare verb stem if the verb is not intrinsically negative (**al** ‘not to be ... ’ or **il** ‘to be non-existent’) and subsequently adding the verbal noun suffix **mai**. If the verb is intrinsically negative, the verbal noun suffix **mai** is directly added to the stem.

Neither the affirmation-negation distinction nor the distinction in person-number-gender is made by the verbal noun suffix **mai**. Verbal nouns are treated like neuter singular verbs for syntactic purposes.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare stem + **ā** + **mai**

negative **al** or **il** + **mai**

*Suffix Structure and Example***mai:**(bare stem + ā + **mai**)avaṇ **nalkāmai**yiṇ ampāl āki (aka.102:16, 17)[**nalku** ‘to be gracious, compassionate’;**nalkāmai** < **nalk(u)** + ā + **mai**]‘since he **did not show** compassion, rumor developed and ...’(bare stem + glide + ā + **mai**)yāṇar ūraṇ kāṇunaṇ āyiṇ **varaiyāmai**yō aritē (narr.390:7-8)[**varai** ‘to choose, marry’; **varaiyāmai** < **varai** + glide **y** + ā + **mai**]‘If the Ūraṇ from the bounteous town sees her, it would be impossible (for him) **not to choose** (her for his bride).’(negative **al** or **il** + **mai**)avai niṇakku **iṛumpūtu aṇmai** naṛku aṇintēm (pari.4:3-4)[**iṛumpūtu** ‘wonder’; **aṇmai** < **al** ‘not to be ...’ + **mai**]‘We know well that those things **are not wonders** for you.’**pāyal inmai**yiṇ pāciḷai ṇekila (pati.68:15)[**pāyal** ‘sleep’; **inmai** < **il** ‘to be non-existent’ + **mai**]‘as the women’s bright ornaments become loose **since** there is **no sleep** (and consequently she is growing thin)’

SECTION 5

A NOTE ON PARTICIPLES

GENERAL: Participles are derived from verb stems and, so far as classical Tamil is concerned, can be divided into two types: the nominal and the verbal.¹ In this study, the nominal participle is referred to as the “adjectival participle.” The verbal participles are here sub-divided into several categories: the adverbial participle, the infinitive, the conditional, the causal, the concessive of fact, and the concessive of supposition.²

The participle is like a verb in that it contains a past/completive marker or a non-past/non-completive marker. It is never declined; that is, case markers are never added to a participle, but certain postpositions (**aḷavai**, **uḷi**, **kaṭai**, **kaṇ**, **kāl**, and **piṇ**) can follow or be added to an adjectival participle. See under the chapters on the adjectival participles and the case markers and postpositions.

¹ The traditional terms are **peyar eccam** (nominal participles) and **vinai eccam** (verbal participles).

² The tradition does not employ different names for the sub-categories of the verbal participle.

The Nominal Participle: In classical Tamil, the past adjectival participle and the non-past adjectival participles are derived respectively from the past/completive stem and the non-past/non-completive stem of a verb. The affirmative adjectival participle indicates a completive or an incomplete phase of the action/state indicated by the verb from which it is derived. When the participle is negative, it signifies the absence or “non-happening” of the state/action indicated by the verb from which it is derived. In either case, the subject of that verb is a nominal which is the “completing nominal” or the “head noun.” The completing nominal need not be the subject of the main sentence. However, the adjectival participle and its head noun / completing nominal reside in the same clause in the sentence, with the participle preceding the completing nominal. A sentence may have many clauses, with a nominal participle and its respective completing nominal co-residing in any clause. See the chapters on adjectival participles for examples.

The Verbal Participle: The affirmative verbal participle indicates a completive or an incomplete phase of the action/state indicated by the verb from which it is derived. When the participle is negative, it signifies the absence or “non-happening” of the action/state indicated by the verb from which it is derived. Whether affirmative or negative, the occurrence or the absence of the action/state indicated by the verbal participle precedes, follows, or takes place simultaneously with another action/state, which can be called the “completing/concluding action/state.” The completing action/state is the action/state of the main verb in the same clause as that of the verbal participle, but need not be the one indicated by the main verb in the main sentence. Moreover, the completing action/state can be affirmative or negative, even when the participle is negative.

A verbal participle and the verb of its completing action/state reside in the same clause. Also the participle does not always share its subject

with that of its completing action/state. A sentence may have many clauses, with a verbal participle and its respective completing action/state co-residing in any clause.

There are two factors to be considered for understanding the relation between the action/state indicated by the verbal participle and its completing action/state: the sequence in which these two actions/states happen and how they affect each other. When the action/state of the verbal participle and its completing action/state do not co-occur, the action/state of the participle may be a result, a purpose, a condition, or a cause with regard to its completing action/state.

The positive adverbial participle and a few conditionals are derived from the past/completive stem of a verb, whereas the infinitive, the negative adverbial participle, and some conditionals are derived from the non-past/non-completive stem of a verb. The causal is derived from certain verbal nouns. The concessive of fact and the concessive of supposition are derived from the bare verb stem, certain non-past/non-completive stems, the past/completive stem, the adverbial participle, or the conditional. For the specifics, see “The Concessive of Fact” and “The Concessive of Supposition.”

The infinitive translates as ‘to do verb.’ The “verb” is the verb from which the infinitive is derived. The action/state indicated by the infinitive co-occurs, precedes, or follows its completing action/state; when they do not co-occur, the action/state of the infinitive is the result or the purpose of the completing action/state and vice versa. The adverbial participle translates as ‘X having done verb . . .’ or ‘X did verb and . . .’ The “X” is the subject of the verb. The action/state indicated by an adverbial participle precedes and results in its completing action/state. The conditional translates as ‘if X verb(s/ed/en).’ The action/state indicated by the conditional precedes and is a condition for its completing action/state. The causal translates as ‘since X verb(s/ed/en).’ The action/state indicated by the causal precedes and is a cause for its completing action/state. The concessive of fact can

be translated as ‘even though X verb(s/ed/en).’ It provides a sense of actual occurrence or materializing of the action/state indicated by the verb underlying it. The action/state indicated by the concessive of fact precedes and results in its successive action/state. The concessive of supposition can be translated as ‘even if X verb(s/ed/en).’ It provides a sense of an assumed occurrence or materializing of the action/state indicated by the verb underlying it. The action/state indicated by the concessive of supposition also precedes and results in its successive action/state.

In all these cases, the verbal participle is followed by a completing/concluding/successive action/state denoted by a verb in the same clause. See all the chapters on these participles for examples.

THE PAST ADJECTIVAL PARTICIPLE

(Past Relative Participle)

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles” for more general information. The adjectival participle is derived from a verb and indicates the completive or non-completive state/action of the verb while modifying a nominal which follows the verb. The nominal modified by the adjectival participle is the participle’s own subject but need not be the subject of the finite verb in the main sentence. It can be anywhere to the right of the participle in the same clause, not necessarily to the immediate right.¹

Two types of adjectival participles are found in classical Tamil — the affirmative and the negative. Only the affirmative kind can be divided into the “past” and the “non-past” adjectival participles. See “The Negative Adjectival Participle” for information on the negative type, and “Adjectives or Noun Modifiers” for the relation between the adjective and the adjectival participle.

¹ The traditional term for an adjectival participle in Tamil is **peyareccam**, literally, ‘remains of a nominal.’

FORMATION: The past affirmative adjectival participle is derived by suffixation. The suffix **a** is added to the past stem of the verb. See “The Past Stem” for information on the notion of “the past” and “the past stem.”

While no person-gender distinction is made, a distinction between the singular and the plural is rarely made by the past adjectival participle suffix indicating negation.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: past/completive stem + **a**

Suffix Structure and Example

a:

(past stem + **a**)

vēṅkai tāaya tēm pāy tōṛram (*aka.12:10*)

[**tā** ‘to scatter, spread’; **tāaya** < **tāy** + **a**; **vēṅkai** ‘veṅkai flowers’;
tōṛram ‘view’]

‘the honey-filled view of scattered vēṅkai flowers’

uḷuta nōṇ pakaṭu (*pura.125:7*)

[**uḷu** ‘to plow’; **uḷuta** < **uḷut** + **a**]

‘strong bull which plowed (the land)’

kēṇi uṇ tuṛai t tokka pāci (*kuṛu.399:1-2*)

[**toku** ‘to collect’; **tokka** < **tokk** + **a**; **pāci** ‘algae’]

‘the algae which has collected in the section (allocated) for drinking water from the well’

kaṭu vaḷi **tokutta** neṭu veṇ **kuppai** (kuru.372:2)

[**toku** ‘to collect’; **tokutta** < **tokutt** + **a**; **kuppai** ‘pile’]

‘tall white **pile** (of sand) **which** the gusty wind **collected**’

‘tall white pile (of sand) which was collected by the gusty wind’

maṇṭu amar **aṭṭa** mataṇ uṭai **nōnrāḷ** (puṛa.213:1)

[**aṭu** ‘to kill, destroy’; **aṭṭa** < **aṭṭ** + **a**; **nōnrāḷ** ‘diligent effort’]

‘strong **diligent effort** **which** destroyed the upsurging war’

nī **kātta** nāṭu (pati.13:28)

[**kā** ‘to protect, shield’; **kātta** < **kātt** + **a**; **nāṭu** ‘country’]

‘the **country** **which** you **protected**’

puli p **pal** **kōtta** pulampu maṇi t **tāli** (aka.7:18)

[**kō** ‘to string’; **kōtta** < **kōtt** + **a**; **tāli** ‘talisman’;

pulampu ‘to resound, to be alone’]

‘the **tāli** (talisman) **in** **which** a tiger’s **teeth** **are** **strung** together with jingling bells’

‘the **tāli** (talisman) in which a tiger’s teeth are strung together with a single bell’

taṭakkai **uyartta** yānai (tiru:158)

[**uyar** ‘to rise’; **uyartta** < **uyartt** + **a**; **yānai** ‘elephant’]²

‘the **elephant** **which** raised its big strong trunk’

² Note that in modern Tamil, it is **uyarttiya** < **uyarrttu** ‘raise’ + **i** past marker + glide **y** + **a** adjp suffix.

uyarnta utavi (matu.743)
 [uyar ‘to be lofty, noble’; **uyarnta** < **uyarnt** + **a**; **utavi** ‘help’]
 ‘noble help’

mā malai payanta kāmaru maṇi (puṛa.218:2)
 [paya ‘to yield’; **payanta** < **payant** + **a**; **maṇi** ‘gem’]
 ‘desirable **gem** which the dark mountain **yielded**/released’

avarai arunta manti (aiṅk.271:1)
 [aruntu ‘to eat’; **arunta** < **aruntiya** < **arunti** + glide **y** + **a**;
manti ‘female monkey’]
 ‘the **monkey** which ate pea pods’

vaṇṭu paṭa olinta kūntal (pati.31:23-24)
 [oli ‘to bring forth the inner life; shine’; **olinta** < **olint** + **a**;
kūntal ‘tresses’]
 ‘**hair** that **grew** brilliantly attracting the bees’
 ‘shiny hair that attracts the bees’

tēral aṛiyātu uṇṭa kaṭuvan (aka.2:5)
 [uṇ ‘to eat’; **uṇṭa** < **uṇṭ** + **a**; **kaṭuvan** ‘male monkey’]
 ‘the male **monkey** which ate the nectar unknowingly’

taṇ tuḷikku ēṛra painkoṭi mullai (kuru.382:1)
 [ēl ‘to respond by accepting’; **ēṛra** < **ēṛr** + **a**; **mullai** ‘jasmine’]
 ‘the **jasmine** in the green vine which **responded** to the cool raindrops’

koṭaikkaṭaṇ ēṇra kōṭā neṇciṇ utiyan (aka.168:6-7)
 [ēl ‘to take on’; **ēṇra** < **ēṇr** + **a**; **utiyan** a personal name]
 ‘**Utiyan**, with a non-devious heart, **who took on** the duty of giving’
 ‘non-devious **Utiyan** who accepted the duty of giving’

uḷ āṇra oli (kali.126:8)

[āṇ 'to be content, contained'; āṇra < āṇr + a; oli 'sound']

'sound (of the bell) which is contained'

'muffled sound'

(past stem + in + a)

nī vāḷtal īyā vaḷaṇ aru paitiram anna āyina paḷaṇam tōṟum ...

tāmarai āmpaloṭu malarntu nellin ceṟuvil neyṭal pūppa

(pati.19:17-21)

[ā 'to be'; āyina 'that which became ...' < āy + in + a

paitiram 'green fields'; anna 'like'; paḷaṇam 'field']

'Lotus flowers and water-lilies bloomed in every field which turned into an unfertile green field upon which you did not bestow (the gift of) life, while the neyṭal flowers bloomed in paddy fields, and...'

pōṇa nilam ellām

(pari.22:11)

[pō 'to go'; pōṇa < pōyina < pōy + in + a;

nilam 'land, region']³

'all the lands where (the flood) went/entered'

tuvarina vāṅku tuḷai t tukirin īṅkai pūppa

(aka.243:1-2)

[tuvar 'to be divided/coiled, to turn red';

tuvarina < tuvari + in + a]

³ Compare pōyināḷ (kali.115:12) and pōyinru (narr.56:10). See also "The Past Stem" and "A Note on the Verb āṇ."

Some might treat the *n* in pōṇa as a "hiatus filler" and derive pōṇa thus: pō-k(u)-i-n-a > pōyina > pōṇa, and hold that the past tense suffix has a zero-allomorph in pōṇa (cf. Zvelebil 1970:41).

‘The Īṅkai bloomed like **coral which turned red** with curved hollow stems.’

(past stem + glide + a)

killi pōkiya ... maṇram (pura.220:6, 7)

[pō(ku) ‘to go, depart, leave for’; pōkiya < pōki + glide y + a;
maṇram ‘courtyard’]

‘the **courtyard which** Killi went from’

‘the courtyard which Killi left’

ciṟukārōṭaṇ payiṇoṭu cērttiya kal (aka.1:5, 6)

[cērttu ‘to make join, unite’; cērttiya < cērtti + glide y + a]⁴

‘the **stones which** the man who sharpens objects **joined together** with glue/paste’

kuṇṇa vaippin kāṇam ceṇṇu cēṇ akaṇal valliya nī (narr.137:9-10)

[val ‘be capable’; valliya < valli + glide y + a; nī ‘you’]

‘**you who are capable** of departing (to a) faraway (place) (by) going through the hilly forest’

perum kai yāṇai k kōḷ piḷaittu irīiya aṭu puli (aka.118:8-9)

[iri ‘to flee’; irīiya < irīi + glide y + a; puli ‘tiger’]

‘destructive **tiger which** escaped from being caught by an elephant with a big trunk and **fled**’

‘destructive tiger which escaped from the grasp of an elephant with a big trunk and fled’

⁴ In modern Tamil, the adjectival participle giving the sense ‘joined’ is cērtta, which should be derived from cēr ‘to join’ (cēr + tt + a).

THE NON-PAST ADJECTIVAL PARTICIPLE

(The Present and Future Relative Participles)

GENERAL: For more general information on participles, see “A Note on Participles” and “The Past Adjectival Participle.” There is a participle form, the “non-past” adjectival participle, which can be interpreted as either the “present” or the “future” adjectival participle. The context determines which is appropriate.

There is only one type of the non-past adjectival participle, namely the affirmative. For the negative type, see “The Negative Adjectival Participle” and “Adjectives or Noun Modifiers” for the relation between the adjective and the adjectival participle.

FORMATION: The non-past adjectival participle is derived by suffixation:

- (a) the suffix **a** is added to a periphrastic non-past/non-completive stem;

- (b) the suffix **ū** is added directly to a bare verb stem while **um** is added directly to a bare verb stem or to a non-past/non-completive stem ending with (k)k or pp.

No person-number-gender distinction is made by the non-past adjectival participle suffix. See “The Non-Past Stem” for information on the non-past/non-completive stem.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

periphrastic non-past/non-completive stem + **a**
 non-past/non-completive stem ending with (k)k
 or pp + **um**
 bare verb stem + **ū/um**

Suffix Structure and Example

a:

(periphrastic non-past/non-completive stem + **a**)¹

tīramum vaiyaiyum **cērkinra** kaṇ **kavin** (pari.22:35)

[**cēr** ‘to join, unite’; **cērkinra** < **cērkinr** + **a**;

kavin ‘fascinating beauty, abundance of beauty’]

‘the eye-soothing **beauty** (that arises) **where** / **when** (the river) Vaiyai **joins** the bank’

paṇi aṭūuninra pāṇāl **kaṅkul** (aka.125:11)

[**aṭu** ‘to destroy, kill’;

aṭūu nil ‘to stand destroying, continue to destroy/kill’

¹ See “The Non-past Stem” for obtaining the periphrastic non-past/non-completive stem.

aṭūu ninra < **aṭūu ninr** + **a**; **kaṅkul** ‘midnight’]
 ‘midnight when the cold is killing’

kūrṛu aṭūu ninra yākkai (pati.13:11)
 [yākkai ‘body’; see above example]
 ‘bodies which Death continues to destroy’

maṭa mān viḷikkaṇ pētaiyoṭu inaṇ irintu ōṭa k kāmar neṇcamoṭu ...
tēṭūu ninra iralai ēru (narr.242:7-10)
 [tēṭūu nil ‘to stand searching, continue to search’;
tēṭūu ninra < **tēṭūu ninr** + **a**; **iralai ēru** ‘stag’]
 ‘the stag which continues to search for its mate which ran away
 from its group along with its innocent-looking young one’

um:

(bare stem or non-past/non-completive stem + **um**)

i-n-nōy poṛukkal ām varaittu aṇṇi p peritu āyiṇ (kali.58:20-21)
 [ā ‘to be’; **ām** < **ā** + **um**; **varaittu** ‘it is in the limit’]²
 ‘if this (love)sickness becomes big/chronic without being in the
 limit of bearing’
 ‘if this lovesickness becomes chronic without control’

kaḷiṛu ... tēr nīrkku avāam kāṇam (kali.7:1, 2-3)
 [avā ‘to desire’; **avāam** < **avā** + **um**; **kāṇam** ‘forest’]
 ‘forest where the male elephant(s) desire(s) the mirage’

taṇ tuṇai p pirintu ayāam taṇi k kuruku (kali.121:16)
 [ayā ‘to agonize’; **ayāam** < **ayā** + **um**; **kuruku** ‘heron’]

² Some might consider **ām** to be a contracted form of **ākum** ‘it will be.’

‘lonesome **heron** which is agonizing, being separated from its mate’

irum kaḷi mutalai **mēen tol** (*aka.3:1*)

[**mē** ‘to cover, spread’; **mēen** < **mēem** < **mē** + **um**; **tōl** ‘skin, hide’;

The stem-final **m** changes to **n**.]³

‘**hide covering** the crocodile in the deep backwaters’

vēḷam ... tam kuḷuvoṭu puṇarntu **pōm kunru** (*kali.25:9, 10-11*)

[**pō** ‘to go’; **pō** < **pō** + **um**; **kunru** ‘hill’]

‘**hill** where the elephants go with their group’

maḷai vēṇṭu pulattu māri niṛpa (*pati.13:26*)

[**vēṇṭu** ‘to wish for’; **vēṇṭu** < **vēṇṭu** + **um**; **pulattu** ‘in the region’]

‘as the rain clouds stayed in the **regions** where the rain was **needed**’

‘as the rain clouds stay in the regions where the rain is needed’

kunṛattu p paḷaṅkuḷi akaḷnta kāṇavaṇ kiḷaṅkiṇoṭu kaṇṇakaṇ tū maṇi

perūu nāṭaṇ (*kuṛu.379:1-3*)

[**peru** ‘to obtain, get’;

perūu < **peru** + **um**; **nāṭaṇ** ‘man from the country’]

‘the man from the **country**, where the hill-man when digging an old ditch in the hill **gets** pure big gems together with tubers’

naṇ kalam **tarūum** maṇ paṭu **mārpa** (*pati.21:19*)

[**tar** ‘to bring’; **tarūum** < **tar** + **um**; **mārpa** ‘O man with ... chest’]

‘O man with a chest tainted with (the enemies’) soil, **who brings** lovely treasure (from enemy countries).’

³ Some might treat **mē(m)** as an adjective meaning ‘top.’

varūum amayam (matu:477)

[var 'to come, emerge'; varūum < var + um; amayam 'time']
 'the time which is (forth)coming'

kaṇṇu tantu ... nallūr maṇṇattu p **piṇikkum** ... vēṇkaṭaṇkiḷavōṇ
 (puṛa.389:9-10, 11)

[piṇi 'to bind, tie up'; piṇikkum < piṇikk + um;
 vēṇkaṭam 'Vēṇkaṭam hills']
 'he who has a claim for the Vēṇkaṭam where they bring and tie up
 elephant calves in the good village courtyard'

pataviṇ vār kural **kaṇikkum** ... varai ā (kuru.363:2, 3)

[kaṇi 'to nibble'; kaṇikkum < kaṇikk + um;
 varai ā 'mountain cow']
 'the mountain cow which nibbles on the long bunches of the
 patavu-grass'

cuṭar tuyar **eṭuppum** ... mālai (kuru.398:5)

[eṭu 'to arouse'; eṭuppum < eṭupp + um; mālai 'evening']
 'evening when the flames (of the lamps) arouse the grief (of separation)'

niṇaikkum kālai maruṭkai uṭaittē (puṛa.217:1)

[niṇai 'to think'; niṇaikkum < niṇaikk + um; kālai 'at the time']
 'When thinking about it, it seems amazing.'
 'Come to think of it, it is amazing.'

kōṭiyar tūmpin **uyirkkum** atta k **kēḷal** (aka.111:9-10)

[uyir 'to breathe, gasp'; uyirkkum < uyirkk + um;
 kēḷal 'boar']
 'the wild boar which gasps like the horns of the Kōṭiyar'

kuḷaviyoṭu pacumaral **kaṭkum** kāntaḷ vēli c **cirukuṭi** (*kuṟu.100:2-3*)
 [kaḷ 'to weed, pick'; **kaṭkum** < **kaṭk** + **um**;

cirukuṭi 'small residences']

'small residences with kāntaḷ for fence where (people) **weed out** the wild jasmine together with the green maral-vines'

(non-past/non-completive stem + glide + **um**)

kayam **kaḷiyum** **kōṭai** (*pura.389:3*)

[kaḷi 'to dry up to become clay'; **kaḷiyum** < **kaḷi** + glide **y** + **um**;

kōṭai 'summer']

'summer when the ponds **dry up** (into clay)'

ōmpātu **īyum** āṟṟal em **kō** (*pura.22:33*)

[ī 'to bestow'; **īyum** < **ī** + glide **y** + **um**; **kō** 'king']

'our skillful **king** who bestows without hiding (what he has)'

ninaiyum **kālai** nīyum maṟṟu avarkku aṇaiyai allai (*pura.213:7-8*)

[**ninaī** 'to think, consider'; **ninaiyum** < **ninaī** + glide **y** + **um**;

kālai 'at the time']

'When **thinking** about it, you are not like that toward them either.'

'Come to think of it, you are not their enemy either.'

ū⁴:

(bare stem + **ū**)

etirkolūū nālam tuyil ārātu ānkaṇ mutirpu eṇ mēl muṇṇiya vennōy
uraippiṇ ... matiyum atirvatu pōl ōṭi c cuḷalvatumaṇ

(*kali.146:38-41*)

[**etirkoḷ** ‘to welcome’; **nālam** ‘the earth’]

‘If I talk about my chronic (love)sickness, even the moon will run
around in circles as if it is shaking, and **the earth which welcomes**
it (the moon) will not get any sleep.’

⁴ Note that **ū** is also an infinitive suffix, which means that it signifies a non-past/non-completive aspect.

THE NEGATIVE ADJECTIVAL PARTICIPLE

(Negative Relative Participle)

GENERAL: For general information on the adjectival participle, see “A Note on Participles” and “The Past Adjectival Participle,” and “The Negative” for general information on negative forms.¹

The negative adjectival participle does not refer to a specific time. The context determines what time is meant by the negative adjectival participle. Therefore, there is only one type of negative adjectival participle as the counterpart of the “past” and the “non-past” affirmative adjectival participles.

FORMATION: The negative adjectival participle is derived by suffixation.

- (i) adding **ā** or **āta** directly to the bare verb stem or to a non-past/non-completive stem ending with (k)k. See “A Note on the Verb ā” for the use of **ā** as a negative suffix;

¹ The traditional term for the negative adjectival participle is **etirmaṛai p peyareccam** “nominal participle signifying negation.”

- (ii) adding **al** before adding **ā** or **āta** to a non-past/non-completive stem ending with **(k)k**.

While no person-gender distinction is made, a distinction between the singular and the plural is sometimes made by the negative adjectival participle suffix. The participle with the suffix **āta** modifies a singular noun, whereas such a restriction is absent in the case of **ā**.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare stem + **ā(ta)**
 non-past stem ending with **(k)k** + **ā(ta)**
 non-past stem ending with **(k)k** + **al** + **ā(ta)**

Suffix Structure and Example

ā:

(bare stem + **ā**)

kalañkā c ceñkōl (*pura.230:4*)

[**kalañku** ‘to be agitated, be confused’; **kalañkā** < **kalañku** + **ā**
ceñkōl ‘perfect staff’]

‘perfect staff/sceptre which does not swerve’

poyyā eḷiṇi (*pura.230:6*)

[**poy** ‘to lie, fail’; **poyyā** < **poy** + **ā**; **eḷiṇi** a personal name]

‘**Eḷiṇi** who does not fail’

koṭāa uru keḷu mannar (*pura.392:5-6*)

[**koṭu** ‘to give’; **koṭāa** < **koṭu** + **ā**; **mannar** ‘kings’]

‘frightening **kings who do not give** (to the suppliants)’
 (See “Lengthening of Sounds [aḷapeṭai] and Vowel Clusters” for
 information on vowels like āa.)

(bare stem + glide + ā)

nī vāḷtal īyā vaḷaṇ aṟu paitiram (pati.19:17-18)

[ī ‘to bestow, provide’; īyā < ī + glide y + ā;
 paitiram ‘green fields’]

‘unfertile enemy lands for which you do not provide a (good) life’

ninaiyā mākkal (aka.305:16)

[ninai ‘to think, consider’; ninaiyā < ninai + glide y + ā;
 mākkal ‘people’]

‘people who do not consider’

‘inconsiderate people’

cāvā marapiṇ amarar (pari.2:71)

[cā ‘to die, wither’; cāvā < cā + glide v + ā;
 amarar ‘gods, immortals’]

‘gods with a legend of not dying / not being weary’

‘immortal gods’

(non-past/non-completive stem in k + ā)

īrkku iṭai pōkā ēr iḷa vaṇa mulai (poru.36)

[pō ‘to go, enter’; pōkā < pōk + ā; īrkku ‘straw’; mulai ‘breasts’]

‘beautiful young breasts between which (even) a straw cannot go’

(non-past/non-completive stem in kk + al + ā)

paruntu parakkallā p pārval pācarai (matu.231)

[**para** 'to fly'; **parakkallā** < **parakk** + **al(1)** + **ā**;

pācaṛai 'war camp']

'war camp with a view **where** vultures **cannot fly**'

(Note that the word **pārval** in this example can also be analyzed as **pār** 'seeing' + **val** 'capable.')

(non-past/non-completive stem in **k** + **al** + **ā**)

katir **nuḷaikallā** maram payil kaṭi **miḷai** (pura.21:5)

[**nuḷai** 'to penetrate, enter'; **nuḷaikallā** < **nuḷaik** + **al** + **ā**; **miḷai** 'barrier forest']

'guarded forest, a barrier filled with trees, **through which** the rays (of the sun) **cannot enter**'

āta:

(bare stem + **āt** + **a**)

oru tiṛam **olkāta** nērkōl (kali.42:14)

[**olku** 'to sway, swerve'; **olkāta** < **olku** + **āt** + **a**;

nērkōl 'perfect scale']

'perfect scale **which does not** sway to one side'

(bare stem + glide + **āt** + **a**)

veyil oḷi aṛiyāta ... taṇ kā (kali.30:7)

[**aṛi** 'to know'; **aṛiyāta** < **aṛi** + glide **y** + **āt** + **a**]

'cool grove **which does not** know sunlight'

(non-past/non-completive stem in **k** + **al** + **āt** + **a**)

kaṇai **kaḷikallāta** kal piṛaṅku āriṭai (kali.20:21)

[**kaḷi** 'to pass through'; **kaḷikallāta** < **kaḷik** + **al** + **āt** + **a**;

āriṭai 'difficult path']

'difficult rocky **path through which** an arrow **cannot pass**'

THE ADVERBIAL PARTICIPLE¹

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles” for more general information on participles and “Adverbs” for the use of the adverbial participles as adverbs. The adverbial participle translates as ‘X having done verb ...’ or ‘X did verb and’ The “X” is the subject of the verb underlying the adverbial participle. The action/state indicated by an adverbial participle precedes and results in its successive/completing action/state.

FORMATION: The adverbial participle is derived by suffixation.

(a) **i/y** is added to a bare stem;

(b) **u** is added to the past/completive stem ending with a consonant²

¹ “Converbial” is another modern term referring to the adverbial participle (cf. Hart and Hart 1979:142-143).

² The only exception seems to be that the past/completive stem of the intrinsically negative verb **il** ‘to be non-existent’ takes the adverbial participle suffix **i** or **u**.

There are two types of adverbial participle suffixes — affirmative and negative. See “The Negative Adverbial Participle” for the negative type. No person-number-gender distinction is made by the adverbial participle suffix. The affirmative adverbial participle suffixes are *i*, *y*, and *u*.³

³ In some modern analyses, “the adverbial participle has no morpheme at all” (cf. Zvelebil 1970:41; also Ananthakrishna Pillai 1972:369 and Tokunaga 1981:25). In Zvelebil’s system of analysis, forms like *ōṭ-i* ‘having run’ are segmented as root *ōṭ/u-* + past morpheme *-i*; forms like *makil-ntu* ‘having exulted’, as root *mak-* + derivative suffix *il* + past morpheme *-nt/u*, where *-u* is an automatic non-morphemic phoneme. Thus, the “... adverbial participle is identical with the past stem (past theme of the verb).”

There is no doubt that some adverbial participle forms (i.e., those ending with *i/y*) are identical with their corresponding past/completive stems. Nevertheless, I deliberated over the concepts of past/completive stem and adverbial participle, and finally decided to treat the adverbial participle as distinct from the past stem largely for the practical purposes of this study and specifically because the past/completive stem has a wider use than the adverbial participle.

The past/completive stem serves as a base for deriving certain forms while the adverbial participle does not. For example, consider *irumpu vaṭittanna* *karum kai-k-kāṇavaṇ* ‘the forest man who has strong/dark arms as if (they are) cast in iron’ (*aka.172:6*), where *vaṭittanna* < *vaṭitt* past/completive stem + *anna* ‘like’ (particle of comparison). The adverbial participle form in this case would be *vaṭittu*, which would not be the base for a particle like *anna*. In some editions of classical Tamil poetry, one may find *vaṭittanna* printed as *vaṭittu anna* for the sake of clarity. But one should remember that *vaṭittu anna* would not provide the right metrical pattern unlike the right form *vaṭittanna*. Now, consider *vēṅkai koykuvam cenruḷi* ‘when we went to pick vēṅkai flowers’ (*aka.48:6*). Here, *cenruḷi* < *cenr* past/completive stem of *cel* ‘to go’ + *uḷi* postposition. The adverbial participle form of *cel*, which is *cenru*, cannot be considered as the base for *cenruḷi*. If any, the adjectival participle form *cenra* might be taken as the base for *cenruḷi*.

As illustrated in these examples, the past/completive marker in some cases is consonantal: *t*, *tt*, or *nt*. The adverbial participle of verbs that take this consonantal marker ends with the suffix *u* which is normally considered as an enunciative vowel or as an “automatic non-morphemic -u” (cf. Zvelebil 1967:101, note 78). Nevertheless, for practical purposes, it would not be wrong to consider the past/completive stem (e.g., *vaṭitt* or *cenr*) and the adverbial participle (e.g., *vaṭittu* or *cenru*) as distinct in these cases.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare verb stem + *i/y*

past/completive stem ending with a consonant + *u*

Suffix *Structure and Example*

i:

(bare stem ± glide + *i*)

annai ... māṇ kaviṇ paṇṭaiyiṇ ciṟakka eṇ makaṭku eṇa p **paraii** ...
kaḷaṇ ilaittu ... vēlaṇ ... tūṅkal vēṇṭiṇ ... eṇ ām kollō

(aka.98:6, 12-13, 14, 18, 20-21)

[para ‘to pray’; **paraii** < para + *i*]

‘What will happen, I am afraid, if mother **prays** “May my daughter’s elegant beauty get better than before” and prepares the arena (for

Adverbial participle forms ending with *i/y*, on the other hand, are identical with their corresponding past stems, and therefore they can be properly said to have a zero participle suffix. When one finds examples like **ūṭṭi anna** oṇ taḷir-c-ceyalai ‘ceyalai leaves which **look** like they are **painted**’ (aka.68:5) or **eḷuti anna** tiṇ nilai k katavam ‘the doorway which **looks** like it was **drawn/painted**’ (aka.311:3), one realizes that **ūṭṭi** and **eḷuti**, derived respectively from **ūṭṭu** ‘to paint, feed color’ and **eḷutu** ‘to write, draw, paint’ can be labelled either as past/completive stems or as adverbial participles.

Even in these cases, if the adverbial participle suffix is assumed to be *i/y*, which would trigger the process of haplology when added to the past stem in *i/y*, one could have the merit of reducing all adverbial participles to a single formula: past stem + adverbial participle suffix, which would apply to modern Tamil also (cf. Hart and Hart 1979:142). Otherwise one would have to have two derivations for the adverbial participle in classical Tamil: bare stem + *i/y*; past/completive stem + *u*.

the ritual dance) and wants Vēlaṇ (the priest of Murukaṇ) to (perform the ritual) dance?’

mulai p pūṇoṭu ... mārpaṇi **kalavi** arivaiyar amirta pāṇam urimai
mākkaḷ uvakai amirtu uyppa ... āṅku ... kātalarum allārum **kūṭi**
k kaṭampu amar celvaṇ kaṭi nakar pēṇa

(*pari.8:118-121, 124-126*)

[**kala** ‘to mingle, mix’ (intransitive); **kūṭu** ‘to gather; get together’;

kalavi < **kala** + glide **v** + **i**; **kūṭi** < **kūṭu** + **i**]

‘(While they bathed in the river), the jewelry on women’s breasts **mixed** with the ornaments on their lovers’ chests; and the nectar (on the lips) of young women triggered the ecstatic nectar of their men. Thus, the lovers and others **gathered** there and worshipped the shrine of the lord (Murukaṇ) who resides in the kaṭampu tree.’

vīṅku piṇi nōṇ kayiṇu **arīi** itai puṭaiyūu ... neṭuñ cuḷi p paṭṭa nāvāy
pōla (matu:376, 379)

[**ari** ‘to sever’; **arīi** < **ari** + **i**]

‘like a ship which was caught in a whirlpool, **having severed** its strong taut mast rope, and with its mast fluttering’

kaṇicci pōl kōṭu **cīi** ēṇu toḷūu p pukuttaṇar (kali.101:8-9)

[**cī** ‘to whittle, sharpen’; **cīi** < **cī** + **i**]

‘They **sharpened** the horns (to look) like a trident and drove the bulls into the stall.’

uṭumpu **korīi** vari nuṇal akaṇtu ... muyal eṇṇinta vēṭṭuvan

(*narr.59:1, 3*)

[**koru** ‘to kill’; **koru** + **i**]⁴

‘the hunter who **killed** a mountain lizard (uṭumpu), dug out tadpoles, and shot (arrows at the) rabbits’

netun tēr kaṭṭiṇṇoṭum **vīci** ... ariya tantu kuṭi **akarri** p periya kaṭṭu
icai **viḷakki** ... nāḷum maṇiṇtu iṇitu uṇaimati peruma

(*matu:752, 766, 777, 780-782*)

[**vīcu** ‘to provide abundantly, give away’; **akarru** ‘to make spread, expand’; **viḷakku** ‘to make ... brilliant’; **vīci** < **vīcu** + **i**;
akarri < **akarru** + **i**; **viḷakki** < **viḷakku** + **i**]

‘O lord, may you always exult and live well, **giving away** tall chariots together with male elephants, bringing in (to your land) precious things, **expanding** (the families of) your subjects, and **making** your **reputation brilliant** by learning great things.’

vaṇṇamum tuṇaiyum **porīi** eṇṇātu emiyēm tuṇinta ēmam cāl aru
viṇai

(*kuri:31-32*)

[**poru** ‘to match, compare’; **porīi** < **poru** + **i**]

‘a rare secure act, which we ourselves deliberated without thinking of **comparing** qualities and kinship’

eṇṇai p poṇukkallā nōy ceytāy **porīi** niṇukkallēṇ

(*kali.94:10-11*)

[**poru** ‘to tolerate, bear with’; **porīi** < **poru** + **i**]

‘You gave me unbearable (love)sickness. I am not able **to bear with** it and sustain.’

⁴ This is the only attested example of this verb. It could be a corrupted form of **kol** ‘to stab.’

puṇal maṇṭi āṭal purivāṇ caṇam maṇṭi ... mēkalai ēṇi p paṭu kāl
iṟukiṟuka t tāl iṭṭi ... parūu k karai naṇṇi ... nīraṇi kāṇpōr
(*pari.10:9, 10-11, 26, 27*)

[iṭu ‘to let down, drop’; iṭṭi < iṭu + i]

‘People were crowded in order to rush to the flood (in the river Vaiyai). Among them (were) those who **let** the locket on their mēkalai (i.e., waist ornament) **down** and tightened its several strands and proceeded to the big river bank, and watched the beauty of the water ...’

aḷuta kaṇṇē ... kuvalai vaṇṭu payil pallital **kalaii** t taṇ tuḷikku ēṇṇa
malar pōṇṇaṇavē (*kuru.291:5, 6-8*)

[kalai ‘to be in disarray’; kalaii < kalai + i]

‘Her eyes, which shed tears, looked like kuvalai flowers whose many petals, having been swarmed by the honeybees, **were disarrayed and** responded to cool fresh raindrops.’

māya varaviṇ iyalpu **ninaii** t tēṇṇi ... īriya kaliḷum iḷaḷ ... kaṇ
(*kuri:246, 248*)

[ninai ‘to think, consider’; ninaii < ninai + i]

‘tear-filled eyes of this woman who is reconciled, **having considered** the uncertain nature of (her lover’s) visit’

kaṭi naṇai **pukaii** k kākkam vammō kātal am tōḷi (*puṇa.281:6-7*)

[pukai ‘to smoke; burn and raise smoke’; pukaii < pukai + i]

‘My dear friend, come, let us (raise) **smoke** (by burning) the protective fragrance and shield (the warrior’s wounds from the animals).’

ciṟu tiṇai **uṇṇi** ... uyar cimai k kēḷal uṇṇikum naṇ malai
(*aiṇk.268:2, 3-4*)

[uṇ ‘to eat’; uṇṇi < uṇ + i]

‘the good mountain where pigs, **having eaten** the small millet, sleep on the tall peak’

eḷuvaroṭu **muraṇi** c ceṇru amar kaṭantu niṇ āṇṇal tōṇṇiya aṇṇum
pāṭunarkku ariyai (pura: 99:9-11)

[**muraṇ** ‘to contradict’; **muraṇi** < **muraṇ** + **i**]

‘You were difficult for the singers (to sing about) even on that day when you revealed your skills by **contradicting** the seven (kings) and going and defeating (them) in the war.’

vaḷai nīr mēyntu kiḷai mutal **celīi** vāpparai virumpiṇai āyiṇum ...
ciṇṇu iruntu ... veṇkuruku eṇava kēṇmati (narr.54:1-2, 3, 4)

[**cel** ‘to leave for a destination’; **celīi** < **cel** + **i**]

‘O white heron, although you want to feed on the (fish in the) wavy water and **reach** your kith and kin and fly away, wait a little and listen to what I say.’

elli vantaṇrō tēr eṇa c **colli** alar eḷuntaṇru iv-ūrē (narr.191.6-7)

[**col** ‘to reveal, state’; **colli** < **col** + **i**]

‘Gossip arose in this town **saying** that a chariot came (to town) last night.’

vaiyai akam ... cīr amai pāṭal payattāl kiḷar cevi **tevi** ... ampi
karavā vaḷakkirru (pari.11: 61, 69, 67)

[**tev** ‘to snatch, grab’; **tevi** < **tev** + **i**]

‘The middle of Vaiyai does not conceal the movement of the boats (because of) **snatching** (everyone’s) ears by the effect of rhythmic songs (of the women in the boats).’

cēvalum nakai vāy k **koḷīi** nakutoṇum viḷikkum (narr.218:3-4)

[**koḷ** ‘to have, take hold’; **koḷīi** < **koḷ** + **i**]

‘And the rooster, **holding** joy in its mouth, calls whenever it rejoices.’
 nal il pal vēru paṇṭamōṭu ūṇ malintu **kaviṇi** malaiyavum nilattavum
 nīravum piṇavum

pal vēru tiru maṇi muttamōṭu poṇ koṇṭu ciṇanta tēettu p paṇṇiyam
 pakarnar (matu:502-506)

[**kaviṇ** ‘to be abundant in beauty, decorative, fascinating’;

kaviṇi < **kaviṇ** + **i**]

‘merchants who **are attractive/fascinating** because they live in households filled with many different things and foods and who sell in excellent countries many different rich gems, pearls, and gold which come from the mountains, land, sea, and other places’

u⁵:

(past/completive stem + **u**)

tā ciṇai **piḷantu** tāru aṭu kaḷirriṇ vīru peṇa ōcci k kal eṇ cuṇṇa k
 kaṭuṇ kural avittu em collal pāṇi niṇṇaṇṇ (kuri:149-152)

[**piḷa** ‘to split, break’; **piḷantu** < **piḷant** + **u**]

‘He **broke** a wide branch, raised it high majestically like a male elephant that is destroying the mahout’s spear and controlled the harsh barking of the hounds, and stood for the moment of our talking.’

puli aṇci k kuṇu naṭai k kaṇṇu uṭai vēḷam niṇṇu **kāttu** alkum ... neṇi
 (naṇṇ.85:4-6)

[**kā** ‘to shield, protect’; **kāttu** < **kātt** + **u**]

⁵ Zvelebil considers this **u** to be an “automatic non-morphemic -u” (cf. Zvelebil 1967:101, note 78).

‘the path where the elephant, being afraid of the tiger, stands and **shields** its toddler-calf’

irantōr vēṇṭiya **koṭuttu** avai tā eṇ collinūm innātō nam iṇ uyir ilappē
(*kuṛu.349:5-7*)

[**koṭu** ‘to give away’; **koṭuttu** < **koṭutt** + **u**]

‘Is losing our sweet life more unpleasant than **giving** what the suppliants wanted and saying “Give them back” ?’

tāl niḷal maruṅkil aṇukupu kuṛuki **toḷutu** muṇ niṛkuvir āyiṇ
(*poru:149-150*)

[**toḷu** ‘to worship, bow’; **toḷutu** < **toḷut** + **u**]

‘If you would get close to the vicinity of (his) feet’s shadow, **bow in worship**, and stand in front (of him) ...’

māru **porutu** ṭṭiya pukalviṇ
(*kuṛi:135*)

[**poru** ‘to fight back, match’; **porutu** < **porut** + **u**]

‘like the bull which **fought back and** drove away its opponent’

irum puṇam niḷattaliṇ ... nōy **mikku** ... vīlaiyar veṭi paṭuttu etira
(*kuṛi:157, 158, 161*)

[**miku** ‘to increase’; **mikku** < **mikk** + **u**]

‘since it destroyed the dark millet field, men whistling, their anger **having increased**, created a huge commotion (in the field) and came in front (of the elephant), and ...’

ventu āru poṇṇiṇ anti pūppa
(*aka.71:6*)

[**ve** ‘to boil, steam up’; **ventu** < **vent** + **u**]

‘as the (light of the) dusk spread like gold that is cooling off, **having been boiled/melted**’

nontu nontu eḷutu eḷil unkaṇ pāvai ... vellam nintum nāl

(*narr.177:8-10*)

[**no** ‘to suffer internally’; **nontu** < **nont** + **u**]

‘the day when I **suffer again and again** and the apple of my beautiful decorated attractive eye would swim in the flood (of tears)’

āṭavar ... viḷuppuṇ kāṇiya puram **pōntu** ... tiritarum vēntaṇ

(*neṭu:171, 172, 187*)

[**pō** ‘to go’; **pōntu** < **pōnt** + **u**]

‘the king who **went outside** in order to look at the warriors’ wounds of war and walks around’

nīyum **kaṇṭu** numaroṭum eṇṇi aṇivaṇintu aḷaval vēṇṭum (*narr.32:5-6*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see/think over’; **kaṇṭu** < **kaṇṭ** + **u**]

‘You must **see** for yourself, consider it along with your kin, know all that must be known, and evaluate.’

veṇ pal nakai **māṇṭu** ilaṅku nalam keḷu tuvar vāy (*aka.162:12-13*)

[**māṇ** ‘to be perfect, elegant’; **māṇṭu** < **māṇṭ** + **u**]

‘shining coral-like mouth, filled with loveliness and **elegant** with the brightness of the smile of (her) white teeth’

‘her lovely shiny coral-like red mouth which is elegant with bright smile’

nuṇ pul ... eyiṇṇiyar ... nila ural **peytu** ... ulakkai ōcci ... vārātu aṭṭa
puḷukkal (*peru:94, 96, 97, 100*)

[**pey** ‘to pour’; **peytu** < **peyt** + **u**]

‘cooked rice, the fine grains of which the hunter-women **poured** into the mortar made in the ground and pounded with a pestle and cooked without washing’

muṛṛā iḷantaḷir koytu koṇṭu uppu **inru** nīr ulai āka ēṛri mōr **inru** aviḷp
 patam maṛantu pācataku micaintu ... tuvvāḷ ākiya eṇ veyyōḷ
 (*puṛa.159:10-12, 14*)

[**il** ‘to be absent, not to exist’; **inru** < **inr** + **u**]

‘my wife who picks and takes the young tender leaves, cooks them in water **without** salt, eats the greens **without** buttermilk and forgetting the rice, and does not enjoy (life)’

neṭun tēr kaḷiṛroṭum vīci ... ariya tantu kuṭi akaṛri p periya **kaṛru**
 icai viḷakki ... nāḷum maḷiḷntu iṇitu uṛaimati peruma
 (*matu:752, 766-767, 780-781*)

[**kal** ‘to mature by experience, learn’; **kaṛru** < **kaṛr** + **u**]

‘O lord, may you always exult and live well, giving away tall chariots together with male elephants, bringing in precious things (to your land), expanding (the families of) your subjects, and making your reputation brilliant by **learning** great things.’

aruṅkarai kaviya k kutti kuḷi **konru** perum kai yāṇai piṭi pukkāṅku
 (*paṭṭ:223-224*)

[**kol** ‘to stab’; **konru** < **konr** + **u**]

‘as if a trapped elephant with a big trunk (escaped and) united with its mate, by **stabbing** the trench so that the complicated steps (in the trench) caved in’

‘as if a trapped elephant with a big trunk **destroyed** the trench making the complicated steps (in the trench) cave in and united with its mate ‘

(Note that **kol** does not mean ‘to take away one’ s life.’)

uṭumpu korīi vari nuḷal **akaḷntu** ... muyal eṇinta vēṭṭuvan
 (*naṛṛ.59:1, 3*)

[**akaḷ** ‘to dig (out)’; **akaḷntu** < **akaḷnt** + **u**]

‘the hunter who killed a mountain lizard, **dug out** tadpoles **and** chased rabbits’

tuvarai āṇṭu nārpaṭṭu oṇṇṭu vaḷi muṇai vanta vēḷiruḷ vēḷē
(*puṛa.201:10-12*)

[āḷ ‘to rule over’; āṇṭu < āṇṭ + u]

‘O the best Vēḷ (chieftain) among the group of Vēḷir who **ruled over** the city of Tuvarai and lasted for forty nine generations.’

murrā iḷantaḷir koytu koṇṭu uppu iṇṇu nīr ulai āka ēṇṇi mōr iṇṇu aviḷ p
patam maṇantu pācaṭaku micaintu ... tuvvāl ākiya eṇ veyyōḷ
(*puṛa.159:10-12, 14*)

[koḷ ‘to take, draw toward self’; koṇṭu < koṇṭ + u]

‘my wife who picks and **holds** the premature tender leaves, cooks them in water without salt, eats the greens without buttermilk and forgetting the rice, and does not enjoy (life)’

nīṭu vālka eṇṇu yāṇ neṭum kaṭai kuṟuki p pāṭi niṇṇa paci nāl
(*puṛa.237:1-2*)

[nīḷ ‘to be long; extend’; nīṭu < nīṭ + u]

‘hungry day(s) when I approached (his) tall doorway and stood singing “May you live **long**.”

ēṇṇu kaṇṭai ... veruvaru tūmam eṭuppa vekuṇṭu tiritarum kol kaḷiṇṇum
pōṇṇm
(*kali.104:42, 43-44*)

[vekuḷ ‘to be enraged; be roused’; vekuṇṭu < vekuṇṭ + u]

‘Look at this bull. It is like an elephant which is **enraged and** wanders when frightening smoke rises.’

pōr vēṭṭu ... muṇai keṭa c ceṇṇu ... ūr kaviṇ aḷiya p perum pāl
ceytum amaiyāṇ
(*paṭṭ:234, 238, 269, 270*)

[vē] ‘to wish for’; vēṭṭu < vēṭ + u]

‘Wishing for war and going through the battle-front as it perished, he would not stay calm even after making great destruction to towns which lose their beauty/attraction.’

ittu ānru āṇā iṭaṇ uṭai vaḷaṇ

(pati:32:6)

[ān ‘to be content with’; ānru < ānr + u]

‘wealthy bounty that does **not cease** (to exist even) when the (act of) giving (has) stopped’

kiḷai k kaviru eḷutaru kiḷ nīr c cev arumpu

(tiru:29)

[kavin ‘to be decorative; fascinate’; kaviru < kavinr + u]

‘the red buds which rise up from the low-waters **decorating** the branches’

y:

(bare stem + y)

peru nal vāṇattu p paruntu ulāy naṭappa

(paṭṭ:233)

[ula ‘to move around’; ulāy < ula + y]

‘as the vultures **move around** and fly in the lovely big sky’

kāl eṇṇa k kaṭitu urāy nāṭu keṭa eri parappi ... aracu paṭa amar
uḷakki kaḷam vēṭṭa ... vēntē

(matu:125-126, 128, 129)

[ura ‘to spread’; urāy < ura + y]

‘O king, who performed the war sacrifice by **spreading** (your army) fast like the wind and spreading fire so that (enemy) countries are destroyed, and stirring up the war so as the (enemy) kings are killed.’

kāay k koṇṭa num iyam toypaṭāmal

(malai:365)

[kā ‘to lift by hanging’; kāay < kā + y]

‘so that your instruments, which you are carrying by **hanging**, do not sag’

katum eṇa k karaintu vam eṇa k **kūuy** ataṇ murai kaḷippiya piṇrai
(*poru:101-102*)

[**kū** ‘to call out’; **kūuy** < **kū** + **y**]

‘He invited us immediately and **called out** “Come,” and went through the conventions (related to the invitation). After that, ...’

kaṭampiṇ kaṭi uṭai muḷu mutal tumiya **ēey** veṇṇu eṇi muḷaṅku paṇai
ceyta vel pōr (p*ati.11:12-14*)

[**ē** ‘to command, order’; **ēey** < **ē** + **y**]

‘the war at which (the king) **commanded** (his warriors) to chop the bulky trunk of the enemies’ well-guarded kaṭampu tree and conquered and made a roaring drum (out of the tree)’

THE NEGATIVE ADVERBIAL PARTICIPLE

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles” and “The Adverbial Participle.” The negative adverbial participle translates as ‘X, without doing verb ...’ or ‘X did not do verb and’ The “X” is the subject of the verb underlying the adverbial participle. That is to say that when the participle is negative, it signifies the absence or “non-happening” of the action/state indicated by the verb from which it is derived.

FORMATION: The negative adverbial participle is derived by suffixation in the following ways:

- (i) adding just **ā** directly to the bare stem or following the **ā** with **mai** or **mal**;
- (ii) adding **āt** to the bare stem and following it with **u** or **ē**;
- (iii) adding **al** to the non-past/non-completive stem ending with **(k)k** and subsequently following it with **āt + u**;
- (iv) adding **i** directly to the intrinsically negative verb **il** or to the past/completive stems of the intrinsically negative verbs **al** and **il**;

- (v) adding **u** to the past/completive stem of the intrinsically negative verb **il**.

No person-number-gender distinction is made by the negative adverbial participle suffix.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation. See above in “Formation.”

Suffix Structure and Example

ā(a)¹:

(bare stem ± glide + ā)

pūvē ... taṇ uṇ viḷumam **ariyā** meṇ mela t teṇ katir iṇ tuyil pacu
vāy tiṇakkum (narr.275:2, 4-5)

[**ari** ‘to know, realize’; **ariyā** < **ari** + glide **y** + **ā**]

‘The flowers, **without realizing** the grief that they are about to experience, slowly and gently open their fresh mouths in their pleasant sleep in the light of the destructive rays (of the sun).’

pākaṇum niṭṭittāy eṇṇu kaṭāam kaṭum tiṇ tēr pūṭṭu **viṭāa** niṇuttu
(kali.66:23-25)

[**viṭu** ‘to let go, release’; **viṭāa** < **viṭu** + **ā**]

‘And the chariot driver would rush the strong fast chariot (even) **without releasing** its lock because you were delayed (here).’

¹ Note that **ā** occurs as an infinitive suffix also, but giving a positive sense. See “The Infinitive” and “A Note on the Verb ā.”

ā(a)tu:

(bare stem + **āt** + **u**)

vaḷaimakaḷ **kuṛāatu** malarnta āmpal (pati.23:23-24)

[**kuṛu** 'to pick'; **kuṛāatu** < **kuṛu** + **āt** + **u**]

'water-lilies which opened up **without** the woman with bangles **picking** them'

'water-lilies which opened up and were left (in the field) without being picked by the woman wearing bangles'

kuḷici vāṇ kēḷ irum puṭai **kaḷāatu** ēṛri c cānta viṛakiṇ uvitta puṇkam (pura.168:9-11)

[**kaḷu** 'to wash'; **kaḷāatu** < **kaḷu** + **āt** + **u**]

'the meal which was cooked with sandalwood as firewood in a big pot whose dark sides were **not washed**'

puṇai **perātu** aru nilai nīriṇ aval tuyar (pari.21:42-43)

[**peru** 'to get, obtain'; **perātu** < **peru** + **āt** + **u**]

'her distress in the dangerous water, **because she does not** hold on (to the bamboo)'

koḷuṇkuṛai kuy iṭutōṛum **ānātu** ārppa (pati.21:10-11)

[**ān** 'to be content'; **ānātu** < **ān** + **āt** + **u**]

'as the fat bits (of flesh) make noise **endlessly** whenever the seasoning is put/added'

(bare stem + glide + **āt** + **u**)

pāṛai neṭuṇ cuṇai viḷainta tēṛal **aṛiyātu** uṇṭa kaṭuvaṇ (aka.2:4-5)

[**aṛi** 'to know, realize'; **aṛiyātu** < **aṛi** + glide **y** + **āt** + **u**]

'the male monkey which drank **without knowing** the nectar that fermented in the large pool among the rocks'

(non-past/non-completive stem in **kk + al + āt + u**)

karanta kāmam kai n **niṛukkallātu** nayantu nām viṭṭa naṇmoḷi
(aka.198:2-3)

[**niṛu** ‘to make stay, check, hold’;

niṛukkallātu < **niṛukk + al + āt + u**]

‘good words which we expressed willingly **without being able to hold** the passion which (we) had concealed (earlier)’

(non-past/non-completive stem in **k + al + āt + u**)

nīr koṇṭu vicumpu **ivarkallātu** ... kuṇṇam nōkki p perum kali vāṇam
ērtarum poḷutu (kuru.287:5-6, 7-8)

[**ivar** ‘to crawl up’; **ivarkallātu** < **ivark + al + āt + u**]

‘the time when the big roaring clouds take in water and rise up toward the hills, **without crawling up the sky**’

ātē:

(bare stem + **āt + ē**)

emmaiyum aṇṇu aṇa c **cūlātē** āṇṇitai nummoṭu tunṇam tunaiyāka
nāṭiṇ atu allatu iṇṇamum uṇṇō emakku (kali.6:8-11)

[**cūl** ‘to consult, plot, plan’; **cūlātē** < **cūl + āt + ē**]

‘Is there any other pleasure for us (hon.) if you would seek us (hon.) as your companion during (times of) distress in the (forest) way, **without making plans** that might sever (our) fondness?’

ā(a)mal:

(bare stem + **ā + mal**)

eṇṇai nalitarin iv ūr p pali nī **perāamal** koḷvēṇ (kali.65:17-18)

[**peru** ‘to get, obtain’; **perāamal** < **peru + ā + mal**]

‘If (you) hurt me, I will take this town’s offering **without** you getting it.’

num iyam **toypaṭāmal** (*malai:365*)
 [toypaṭu ‘to sag’ < toy + paṭu; toypaṭāmal < toypaṭu + ā + mai]
 ‘without your musical instruments sagging’

ā(a)mai:

(bare stem + ā + mai)

tol iyal **valāamai** t tuṇai eṇa p puṇarntavaḷ (*kali.2:17*)
 [valu ‘to swerve, slip’; valāamai < valu + ā + mai]
 ‘the woman who united (with you) without swerving from the age old tradition’

(bare stem + glide + ā + mai)

pala paṇṭam varampu **aṛiyāmai** vantu iṇṭi (*paṭṭ:131-132*)
 [aṛi ‘to know’; aṛiyāmai < aṛi + glide y + ā + mai]
 ‘many things come and pile up without (anyone) knowing the limit’

i:

(stem il + i)

kuppai vēḷai uppu **ili** ventatai ... micaiyum aḷi paci varuttam (*ciru:137, 139-140*)
 [il ‘to be absent, not to exist’; ili < il + i]²
 ‘the grief of destructive hunger (that accepts) eating wild greens cooked without salt’
 ‘the misery of hunger (that accepts) eating wild greens cooked without salt’

² The form **ili** could be construed as a negative participial noun (like **illātatai**), meaning ‘that which does not have ...’

(past/completive stem of **al/il + i**)

kāṇal āṭiyatu **anri** k karantu nām ceytatu onru illai (narr.27:4-5)

[**al** 'not to be X'; **anri** < **anr** + **i**]

'**Except** for playing in the shore, there was nothing that we did hiding.'

maṇam kavalpu **inri** ... eḷuntu

(poru:95)

[**il** 'to be absent'; **inri** < **inr** + **i**]

'waking up **without** worries in mind'

u:

(past/completive stem of **il + u**)

maṇappu **inru** irunkōḷ īrā p pūṭkai k karumpanūraṇ (pura.381:24-26)

[**il** 'to be absent'; **inru** < **inr** + **u**]

'Karumpanūraṇ with a precept that is **without** forgetfulness and undisturbed from its great goal'

THE INFINITIVE

GENERAL: For more general information, see “A Note on Participles” and “Adverbs” for the use of the infinitives as adverbs. The infinitive translates as ‘to verb.’ The “verb” is the verb from which the infinitive is derived. The action/state indicated by the infinitive co-occurs, precedes, or follows its successive/completing action/state; when they do not co-occur, the action/state of the infinitive is the result or the purpose of the succeeding/completing action/state and vice versa.

FORMATION: The infinitive is derived by suffixation. Certain infinitive suffixes are added directly to a bare stem, while some are added to the non-past/non-completive stem ending with (k)k, t, or (p)p.

No person-number-gender distinction is made by the infinitive suffix. There are no discrete negative infinitive suffixes; see “The Negative Infinitive.” For information on the non-past/non-completive stem, see “The Non-Past Stem.”

The infinitive suffixes are **a**, **ar**, **ā**, **iya**, **iyar**, **ūu**, **pān**, **pu**, **mār**, and **vān**. Among these, **a** is added to a bare stem or a non-past stem ending with **(k)k**, **t**, or **(p)p**, while the others are added only to the bare stem.¹

The following table indicates the function of the infinitive suffixes in terms of the sequence of actions. The three columns represent the three sequences in which the action of the infinitive can happen in relation to its completing action. The rows represent the suffixes which mark the infinitives. The first row, for example, tells us that the action of the infinitive marked by the suffix **a** can precede, follow, or occur simultaneously with its completing action.

	precedes	follows	co-occurs (simultaneous)
suffix	a	a	a
	—	ar	—
	—	—	ā
	—	iya	—
	—	iyar	—
	—	—	ūu
	—	pān	—
	pu	—	pu
	—	mār	—
	—	vān	—

¹ In fact, **pān** and **vān** are the combinations of the non-past/non-completive markers **p** and **v** and the affix **ān** which provides a causal sense. Similarly, **pu** is the combination of the non-past/non-completive marker **p** and **u**. See “Case Markers and Postpositions” and “The Causal” for the usage of **ān** as a case marker and a causal suffix. Traditional grammars treat **pān** and **vān** as infinitive suffixes. This study also has presented them as “infinitive suffixes” so that readers familiar with traditional grammars would be able to recognize them.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare stem or non-past/non-completive stem + suffix

Suffix Structure and Example

a:

(bare stem + a)

viṛaliyar niṇ puṛam **cuṛra** (*malai*:46)

[**cuṛru** ‘to surround, encircle’; **cuṛra** < **cuṛru** + a]

‘as the dancing women **surround** you(r side)’

āvum māvum ceṇru **uṇa** k kalaṅki c cēroṭu paṭṭa ciṛumaittu āyiṇum
uṇṇīr maruṅkiṇ atar pala ākum (*pura*.204:7-9)

[**uṇ** ‘to eat, consume’; **uṇa** < **uṇ** + a]

‘Although they are trodden and muddled up **because** cattle and other animals go and **drink** from them, these drinking water puddles have many low paths beside them.’

tirai irum paṇi p pauvam cevvitā **vara** mukantu uravu urum uṭaṇru
ārppa (*pari*.7:1-2)

[***varu** ‘to be dry, empty’; **vara** < **varu** + a]

‘the powerful cloud drew (water) directly **drying up** the dark wavy cold ocean and the strong thunder roared excitedly, and ...’

(bare stem + glide + a)

pari y uṭai vayan̄ku tāl̄ pan̄tiṇ **tāva** ... mallal am cēri kal eṇa t tōṇri
ampal mūtūr alar eḷa c ceṇratu anrō koṇkaṇ tērē

(*narr*.249:7, 9-11)

[tā ‘to leap’; tāva < tā + glide v + a]

‘The Koṇkaṇ’s chariot arrived making a big noise in (our) fertile beautiful residential area and left, **as** the feet of his horses **leapt** like balls, because gossip arose (about our relationship) in (our) good old rumor-stricken town; did it not?’

acumpil paṭu ... kaḷirriṇ varuttam **coliya** p piṭi paṭi muṛukkiya peru
mara p pūcal (aka.8:9-11)

[coli ‘to remove, peel off’; coliya < coli + glide y + a]

‘the big commotion which arose when the female elephant twisted a large tree (for using it) as a step **for removing** the distress of the male elephant which fell into a ditch’

(non-past/non-completive stem in (k)k + a)

arcira k kālai ullār kātalar āyiṇ ollīlai ciṛappoṭu viḷaṅkiya kāṭci **maṛakka**
viṭumō niṇ māmai k kaviṇē (aiṅk.470:2-5)

[maṛa ‘to forget’; maṛakka < maṛakk + a]

‘If your lover does not remember you (even) in the cold season, will the attractive beauty of your dark complexion **let** him **forget** the sight of you with bright ornaments?’

parantu icai **niṛka** p pāṭiṇaṇ (puṛa.126:13)

[niḷ ‘to stay’; niṛka < niṛk + a]

‘He sang (of you) **so** (your) fame spreads and **stays**.’

(non-past/non-completive stem in t + a)

vāṇam poḷinta nīṛ maṇ micai āṇātu vantu tokupu iṇṭi ... pōṇa nilam
ellām pōr āṛ vayal **pukuta** (pari.22:8-9, 11)

[puku ‘to enter’; pukuta < pukut + a]

‘the (rain) water, which the sky poured, collected and gathered endlessly on earth and **entered** hay-filled fields in all the lands it flowed, and ...’

(non-past/non-completive stem in (p)p + a)

piṛaṇ kaṭai **maṛappa** nalkuvaṇ celiṇē (*pura.68:19*)

[**maṛa** ‘to forget’; **maṛappa** < **maṛapp** + a]

‘If (you) go, he will give (you enough) **so as to forget** (about going and standing at) the doors of other people.’

māṇilai neṭuntēr pāṇi **nirpa** p pakalum nam vayiṇ akalāṇ āki p
payiṇṇu varum (*aka.50:4-6*)

[**niḷ** ‘to stand, wait’; **nirpa** < **nirp** + a]

‘He was getting accustomed not to go away from our side even during the day, **while** his tall chariot **waited** around.’

ar:

(bare stem + ar)

niṇ **eṛiyar** ōkkiya ciṇu ceṇkuvaḷai (*pati.52:21-22*)

[**eṛi** ‘to toss’; **eṛiyar** < **eṛi** + glide y + ar]²

‘the small red water-lily which (your queen) raised **to toss/chase** you’

² The contexts in which the verb **eṛi** occurs in classical Tamil indicate that it can be interpreted to mean ‘to be thrown about; tossed’ when used with reference to human beings. But it is understood in modern Tamil to mean ‘to throw (something at someone).’ Note that the Old Commentary on *pati.52:21-22* and a later interpretation of it in the twentieth century reflect these two different ways of interpreting **eṛi**: “**tāṇ avanai eṛitarku** ōkkiya ciṇiyatoru ceṇkuvaḷai” (the Old Commentary) *vs.* “**niṇ miṭu eṛitarporuṭṭut** tūkkiya ciṇiya ceṇkuvaḷai malar” (U.V. Saminathier’s commentary). See how the object of **eṛi** is understood to be different in each case.

(Note that **nī** 'you', in its oblique form **niṇ**, is the object of the verb **eri**.)

ā(a)³:

(bare stem + ā)

nillātu **paṭāa** c celīyar niṇ pakaivar mīṇē (pura.24:24-25)

[**paṭu** 'to die, perish'; **paṭāa** < **paṭu** + **ā**]

'May the stars of your enemies not stay (for ever), but **perish** and be gone.'

anti vāṇamoṭu kaṭal aṇi **koḷāa** vanta mālai (aka.360:8-9)

[**koḷ** 'to acquire, accept, have; **koḷāa** < **koḷ** + **ā**]

'evening which arrived **as** the ocean and the evening sky **acquired** beauty'

(bare stem + glide + ā)

maram **maṛaiyā** k kaḷimiṇ (malai:210)

[**maṛai** 'to hide'; **maṛaiyā** < **maṛai** + glide **y** + **ā**]

'pass through **as** you **hide among the trees**'

(ī)iya:

(bare stem + iya)

neñcam ... avar taḷar aṭi **tāṇkiya** cenṇratu iṇṇē (aka.128:6, 14-15)

³ In one context, **kulāa val vil** 'bent cruel bow' (aka.265:17), the word **kulāa** appears to be an adjectival participle because it is completed by the nominal **vil** 'bow.' However, it can be interpreted as an infinitive derived from **kula** 'to be bent, not straight' and modifying **val** 'strong', which does function as a verb in classical Tamil. See "A Note on the Verb ā" for a discussion of **ā** as a suffix. Also note that Zvelebil (1967:28) treats this **ā** as an adverbial participle suffix.

[**tāñku** ‘to hold, bear’; **tāñkiya** < **tāñku** + **iya**]

‘My heart left (me) **for holding** his staggering steps (through the dangerous mountain path).’

cēval ēṇal kāppōr **uṇarttiya** kūum kāṇattōr niṇ tevvar (*pura.28:8-10*)
[**uṇarttu** ‘make realize, make understand, inform’;

uṇarttiya < **uṇarttu** + **iya**]

‘Your enemies are in the forest where the rooster crows **to inform/alert** the guards of the millet field.’

eṛi nīr vaiyakam **veliīya** celvōy

(*mull:57*)

[**vel** ‘to conquer, defeat’; **veliīya** < **vel** + **iya**]

‘O you, who are proceeding **to conquer** the world surrounded by the tossing waters.’

(non-past/non-completive stem in **kk** + **iya**)

vev veñ kaluḷi tavveṇa k **kuṭikkiya** yāñku vallunaḷ kol (*kurū.356:4-5*)

[**kuṭi** ‘to drink’; **kuṭikkiya** < **kuṭikk** + **iya**]

‘How will she be able **to drink** the hot frothy water with a slurp (that sounds like) “tav”?’

(The form **kuṭikkiya** seems to reflect an attempt to add **iya** to the infinitive stem ending with **kk**. It might reflect an attempt to indicate the “palatalized” nature of the infinitive suffix **a**. The palatalization is due to the **i** preceding **kk**, and is represented by **iy** following **kk**. Thus, we have **kuṭikkiya** instead of the normal **kuṭikka**.)

(**i**)**iyar**:

(bare stem + **iyar**)

kaṭavuḷ **pēṇiyar** koṇṭa tī

(*pati.21:5-6*)

[**pēṇ** ‘to worship’; **pēṇiyar** < **pēṇ** + **iyar**]

‘the fire which (you) tended **in order to worship** the gods’

ciṛu tiṇai p paṭu kiḷi **kaṭṭiyar** ... kuḷir koḷ taṭṭai ... puṭaiyā ... niṇṇa nī
(*aka.32:5-7*)

[**kaṭi** ‘to chase away’; **kaṭṭiyar** < **kaṭi** + **iyar**]

‘you who stood (in the millet field) beating (the tools such as) kuḷir and taṭṭai **in order to chase away** the parrots which came down on the small millets’

ū⁴:

(bare stem + **ū**)

mālai tuṇṇutal **kāṇū** ... muṇkai paṇṇi ... nāṭu aṇi naṇ maṇam ayarkam
... eṇa ... kūṇi ... peyarntaṇaṇ (*kūṇi:230-232, 233, 234, 237*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see, look at’; **kāṇū** < **kāṇ** + **ū**]

‘**Seeing** that the evening is approaching, he took (my) hands and said, “We will celebrate our wedding which the whole country will know” and left.’

(bare stem + glide + **ū**)

aimpāl ciṛu puṇam putaiya vāri k kural **pīḷiyū** neṇi keṭa vīlaṇkiya
nīyir (*aka.8:15-17*)

[**pīḷi** ‘to wring’; **pīḷiyū** < **pīḷi** + glide **y** + **ū**]

‘You who crossed over the paths that perished, **while wringing** your five-parted (wet) hair that is combed covering your small nape.’

⁴ This suffix always occurs as an elongated vowel regardless of the shape of the stem to which it is added. Note that Zvelebil (1967:28) treats it as an adverbial participle suffix.

pān (p + ān):(bare stem + **pān**)

nam valai p paṭṭatōr puttiyāṇai vantatu **kānpān** yān taṅkiṇēṇ
 (kali.97:6-7)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kānpān** < **kāṇ** + **pān**’]

‘I stayed **in order to see** the new elephant which was caught in our net.’

pu (p + u)⁵:(bare stem + **pu**)

evaṇ **ninaipu** vāṭuti (narr.208:4)

[**ninai** ‘to think’; **ninaipu** < **ninai** + **pu**]

‘What are you **thinking about and** wilting (for)?’

talai **irupu** tāroṭu puraḷa ... uruṇṭu piḷantu nerintu **urulpu** **citarupu**
 aḷaru **coripu** nilam cōra c cērār iṇ uyir cekukkum ... nī ēntiya
 paṭaiyē (pari.2:41, 46-47)

[**iru** ‘to be cut off’; **uruḷ** ‘to roll’; **citaru** ‘to scatter’;

cori ‘to pour out’]

‘The weapon you are carrying destroys the enemies’ lives as their heads, **having been cut off**, toss with their garlands, roll, open, **scatter while rolling** wobbly, and fall down to earth **while pouring out** the fat.’

⁵ Note that Zvelebil (1967:28) treats it as an adverbial participle suffix.

mār:(bare stem + **mār**)viḷuppuṇ **taṇimār** kāppu eṇa ... koṭicciyar pāṭal (*malai:303-304*)[**taṇi** ‘to heal, cool off’; **taṇimār** < **taṇi** + **mār**]‘songs of the hill-women (who sing) in order to **heal** the wounds of war’**vān** (**v** + **ān**):(bare stem + **vān**)uḷaiyīr ākavum paṇippōḷ tamiyē **kuḷaivān** ... vāṭaiyum kaṇṭirō vantu
niṇṇratu (*narr.229:8-9, 11*)[**kuḷai** ‘to soften, weaken, cave in slowly’; **kuḷaivān** < **kuḷai** + **vān**]‘Did you see? The cold (wind) has arrived and lingers so that the woman, who shivers/trembles even when you are close by, **grows weak.**’avaḷai k kai p piṇai **nīkkuvān** pāyvāl ... kaṇ oḷi (*pari.7:57, 58*)[**nīkku** ‘to make ... go away; remove’; **nīkkuvān** < **nīkku** + **vān**]‘the brightness of the eyes of the woman who jumped into the (Vaiyai) flood **in order to remove** her (i.e., the other woman’s) hold (of her lover)’

THE NEGATIVE INFINITIVE

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles,” “The Infinitive,” and “The Negative **al** and **il**.”

FORMATION: A periphrasis expresses the notion of what is here referred to as the “negative infinitive.” That is, when the negative adverbial participle of a verb is followed by an affirmative infinitive form of the verb **iru** ‘to continue to be, remain in a certain state’, it takes on the meaning ‘without doing’ Such combination tells us that the action indicated by the verb underlying the adverbial participle did not happen/materialize and that the negative situation continues.

No person-number-gender distinction is made by the negative infinitive.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: periphrasis

negative adverbial participle + infinitive of **iru**

Suffix Structure and Example

kka:

(negative adverbial participle + **irukka**)

tonrātu irukkavum vallan ... **tōṇravum** vallan (pura.315:5, 7)

[**tōṇru** ‘to be visible, appear’;

tōṇrātu iru ‘to remain without being visible’]

‘He is capable of remaining **without being visible**. He is also capable of being visible.’

ppa:

(negative adverbial participle + **iruppa**)

puṇaviṇ ceṅkāl cēval iṇpuṇu peṭaiyoṭu maṇṇu tēṇtu **uṇṇātu iravum**
pakalum mayaṅki k kaiyaṇṇu ... **iruppa** (neṭu:45-47, 48)

[**uṇ** ‘to eat’; **uṇṇātu iru** ‘to remain without eating’]

‘as the red-legged male dove remains reluctantly, being confused about the day and the night, **without** choosing to **eat** at the courtyard together with its loving female’

THE CONDITIONAL

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles.” The conditional translates as ‘if X verb(s/ed/en).’ The action/state indicated by the conditional precedes and is a condition for its succeeding/completing action/state.

FORMATION: The affirmative conditional is derived by suffixation.

- (i) **in/il** is added to a bare stem or a non-past/non-completive stem ending with **(k)k** or **(p)p**;
- (ii) **āl** is added to a past/completive stem or to a conditional form ending with **in**;
- (iii) **ēl** is added to a past/completive stem or an affirmative finite verb.

Neither a person-number-gender distinction nor a distinction between affirmation and negation is made by the conditional suffix. See “The Non-Past Stem,” “The Past Stem,” and the sections on personal verbs and adjectival nouns for information on the non-past stem, past stem, finite

verbs, and adjectival nouns. See “The Negative Conditional” for information on the negative type.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare stem + **in**
 past/completive stem + **āl**
 conditional form in **in** + **āl**
 non-past/non-completive stem ending with (k)k
 or (p)p + **in/il**
 past/completive stem + **ēl**
 affirmative finite verb + **ēl**

Suffix Structure and Example

āl:

(past/completive stem + **āl**)

nāṭaṇ **kaṇṭāl** koṇṭu maṇai tiruntu aṭi vāḷtti (*pura.390:24-25*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kaṇṭāl** < **kaṇṭ** + **āl**]

‘taking the Nāṭaṇ to (one’s) house **if** (one) sees him and praising his perfect feet’

kaḷaṅkiṇāṇ aṛikuvatu **enrāl** naṇṛāl amma niṇṛa iṇaḷ nalaṇē

(*aiṅk.248:2-4*)

[**en** ‘to say/be’; **enrāl** ‘if it is the case’ < **enr** + **āl**]

‘If only it is / could be understood by the marbles (of the priest), her wellbeing that has stayed (with her so far) is a good one indeed.’

(conditional in **in** + **āl**)

āyar **emar ānāl** āyttiyēm yām mika (kali.108:9)

[ā ‘to be’; **ānāl** < *āyināl < āyin + āl < ā + glide y + **in** + āl]

‘If our kin are cowherds, we are cowherdesses.’

(This is the only occurrence of **ānāl** in the caṅkam anthologies. See “A Note on the Verb ān” for information on the contraction of (y)**in** to **n** in similar forms. Also note that this derivation of adding āl to a form which is already a conditional ending with **in**, holds all the way down to modern Tamil class 3 verbs: e.g., **pēcināl** ‘if X speaks’ < **pēcu** ‘to speak’ + **in** + āl. Normally, scholars would derive modern Tamil **pēcināl** from the “past stem” **pēcin** + āl.)

il:

(non-past/non-completive stem in **kk** + **il**)

in̄itu uṭaṇ **kalikkil** ilamai in̄itāl amma in̄i avar p puṇarvē

(aiṅk.415:3-4)

[**kal̄i** ‘to pass (time), spend’; **kalikkil** < **kalikk** + **il**]

‘Uniting with him now would be sweet indeed, if only (I) spend (my) youth with (him) happily.’

in:

(bare stem + **in**)

kāṇamum in̄iyavām nummoṭu **varinē**

(kuṟu.388:7)

[**var** ‘to come’; **varin** < **var** + **in**]

‘Even the forest would be pleasant if (I) come with you.’

an̄nai **tuñcin** tuñcā k kaṇṇar kāvalar kaṭukuvar

(aka.122:5-6)

[**tuñcu** ‘to sleep’; **tuñcin** < **tuñcu** + **in**]

‘If/when mother sleeps, the guards, with sleepless eyes, would rush (to keep watch).’

taṇ am tuṛaivaṇ **kāṇin** muṇ niṇṇu kaṭiya kaḷaral ōmpumati
(*kuṛu.296:5-6*)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kāṇin** < **kāṇ** + **in**]

‘If you see the man from the cool fresh waterfront, refrain from chiding harshly.’

pāmpu mataṇ aḷiyum pāṇāḷ kaṅkulum ariya alla maṇ ... avar nāṭṭu eṇ arum piṛaṅkal ...

nīyir i-c-curam aṛitalum aṛitirō eṇṇunar p **perinē**
(*aka.8:4-5, 12-13, 17-18*)

[**peru** ‘to get, obtain, have’; **perin** < **peru** + **in**]

‘The unthinkable mountain range in his country is not difficult (to pass through) if (only) we get/find (considerate) people who would ask “Do you really know this forest?” ’

ceṇṇi cēvaṭi **cērttin** eṇ eṇappaṭumō eṇṇalum uṇṭē (*narr.342:9-10*)

[**cērttu** ‘to make join’; **cērttin** < **cērttu** + **in**]

‘If I make my head join (her) red feet, is it likely that (she) would ask “What is it?” ’

‘If I fall at her decorated feet, would she care to ask me “What is it?” ’

(non-past/non-completive stem in (k)k + **in**)

ceṇ cevi eruvaḷ aṇcuvara ikukkum kal atar k kavalai **pōkin** ... arum
tuyar tarum ivaḷ paṇi vār kaṇṇē (*aka.77:11-12, 19*)

[**pō** ‘to go’; **pōkin** < **pōk** + **in**]

‘If I go in the stony forked path where the vultures with red ears moan frightfully, (the memory of) her eyes shedding tears would give unbearable grief.’

niṇ maṇaiyōḷ **kēṭkiṇ** varuntuvaḷ peritē (aiṇk.81:4-5)
 [kēḷ ‘to hear about’; **kēṭkiṇ** < **kēṭk** + **iṇ**]
 ‘If your wife **hears** (about it) she will feel greatly sad.’

(non-past/non-completive stem in (p)p + **iṇ**)

ūraṇoṭu **iruppiṇ** iru maruṇkiṇamē (kuru.370:2-3)
 [iru ‘to remain, stay, sit’; **iruppiṇ** < **irupp** + **iṇ**]
 ‘We are two sides/bodies, **if/when I sit up** with the Ūraṇ.’

puraivatu **ninaippiṇ** puraivatō iṇrē (pati.17:1)
 [niṇai ‘to think’; **ninaippiṇ** < **ninaipp** + **iṇ**]
 ‘**If one thinks** of (something) that measures up (to you), there is nothing that measures up (to you).’

ceṇitoṭi urra cellalum piṇitu eṇa k kāṇ keḷu nāṭaṇ **kēṭpiṇ** yāṇ uyir
 vāḷtal ataṇiṇum aritē (aka.98:28-30)
 [kēḷ ‘to hear about’; **kēṭpiṇ** < **kēṭpiṇ**]
 ‘**If the man from the forest-filled country hears** that the (love)sickness, which the woman wearing many bangles has, is (due to) something else, it will be even more difficult for me to live.’

(bare stem + glide + **iṇ**)

poḷutu iṭai **teriyiṇ** poyyē kāmam (kuru.32:3)
 [teri ‘to reveal itself, surface’; **teriyiṇ** < **teri** + glide **y** + **iṇ**]
 ‘Passion is false, **if lapse of time is visible/noticeable**.’

num kō yār eṇa **viṇaviṇ** em kō ... neṭuñcēralāṭaṇ (pati.20:1, 5)
 [viṇa ‘to enquire’; **viṇaviṇ** < **viṇa** + glide **v** + **iṇ**]
 ‘**If you would ask** who our king is, (I would say that) our king is Neṭuñcēralāṭaṇ.’

ēl:

(past/completive stem + ēl)

a-k-kaviṇ tīrāmal kāppatōr tiraṇ **uṇṭēl** uraittai k kāṇ (*kali.38:12-13*)

[u] ‘to exist’; **uṇṭēl** < **uṇṭ** + **ēl**]

‘Tell me, if **there is** a way to protect that fascinating beauty from being worn out.’

‘Tell me, if there is a way to protect that fascinating beauty from disappearing.’

(finite verb + ēl)

ceṇṇī nī cellā **viṭuvāyēl** ... muṭṭuppāṭu ākalum uṇṭu¹ (*kali.93:33-36*)

[**viṭu** ‘to let go, allow, give up’;

viṭuvāyēl < **viṭuvāy** ‘you will allow (yourself)’ + **ēl**]

‘Please go. **If you allow yourself** not to go (to your other women), there will even be an obstacle.’

¹ Actually, this could be treated as an example of a negative conditional, the sense of which is obtained periphrastically by following an adverbial participle in **ā** (**cellā**) with a conditional in **ēl** (**viṭuvāyēl**). One modern commentator notes that **cellā viṭuvāyēl** is “one word”: cf. P.V. Somasundaranar’s explanation of *kali.93:33*.

Note that the modern Tamil negative conditional does contain the component **āviṭṭāl** which is nothing but an old verbal participle ending with **ā** + **viṭṭāl**: e.g., nī atai c **ceyyāviṭṭāl** ‘if you don’t do it.’ In this example, the form **ceyyā** is, in fact, an old adverbial participle ending with **ā**, whereas **viṭṭāl** is the conditional of **viṭu** ‘to let go.’

ellā nī ur̥ratu evaṇō ... **enr̥rēl** en̄ citai ceytāṇ ivan̄ eṇa ur̥ratu itu
 eṇa ... uraikkum uraṇ akattu uṇṭāyiṇ ... pacakkuva ... en̄ kaṇ
(kali.142:19-23)

[**en̄** ‘to say, ask, enquire’; **enr̥rēl** < **enr̥r** ‘you said’ + **ēl**]

‘If you ask me “What is it that you have?,” the strength will emerge in me and I will tell you that he did (something to) destroy (me) and that this is what happened. And my eyes will become pale.’

THE NEGATIVE CONDITIONAL

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles,” “The Conditional,” and “The Negative **al** and **il**.” The negative conditional translates as ‘if X do/does not do verb.’ That is, when the conditional is negative, it signifies the absence or “non-happening” of the action/state indicated by the verb from which it is derived.

FORMATION: The negative conditional is expressed by suffixing **ēl** to a negative finite verb.¹

¹ An adverbial participle in **ā** could also be followed by a positive conditional in **ēl** to provide the sense of a negative conditional **ceṇṇī nī cellā viṭuvāyēl ... muṭṭuppāṭu ākalum uṇṭu** (*kālī.93:33-36*), which is discussed in “The Conditional” and “A Note on the Verb **ā**.”

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

negative finite verb + ēl

Suffix Structure and Example

ēl:

(negative finite verb + ēl)

ñāyirē eṇ kēlvaṇ yāṅkuḷaṇ āyiṇum kātṭimō **kātṭāyēl** vāṇattu evaṇ
ceyti nī (kali.147:27-29)

[**kātṭu** ‘to make see, show’;

kātṭāyēl < **kātṭāy** ‘you will not show’ + **ēl**]

‘O sun, show me, please, where my husband is. **If you do not show**, what do you do in the sky?’

vaḷaṅkā p poḷutu nī kaṇru mēyppāy pōl vaḷaṅkal aṇivār **uraiyārēl**
emmai ikaḷntārē ... emar (kali.112:12-14)

[**urai** ‘to tell’; **uraiyārēl** < **uraiyār** ‘they will not tell’ + **ēl**]

‘**If** my kin **do not tell** me about your wandering on the pretext of tending the calves at a time when no one moves around, they have certainly ignored me.’

pūṇ vanta vaḷi niṇ pāl māya k kaḷavu **anrēl** tantāṇai t tantē tarukku
(pari.20:76-78)

[**al** ‘not to be ...’; **anrēl** < **anru** ‘it is not’ + **ēl**]

‘**If** (it is true that) the way in which (this) jewelry came to you **is not** an illusive theft, then bring me the man who brought it to you and be proud.’

THE CAUSAL

("since, because of")

GENERAL: See "A Note on Participles" for more general information on the causal. The causal translates as 'since X verb(s/ed/en)' where the "verb" is the verb from which the causal is derived. The action/state indicated by the causal precedes and is a cause for its completing action/state.

FORMATION: The causal form of a verb is derived by suffixation: ān or in is added to a verbal noun ending with **al**, **āl**, **kal**, **tal**, or **mai**.¹ In addition, the word **ataṇāl** 'because of that; therefore' also provides a causal sense.²

¹ See "Case Markers and Postpositions" for more examples and other uses of ān and in.

² **ataṇāl** < **ataṇ** (oblique of **atu** 'that one') + **āl** (suffix): e.g., *naṇṇar naṇmoḷi kēṭṭaṇam ataṇāl ... varutal talaivar vāyvatu* 'We heard lovely and good words (of omen). **Because of that / Therefore**, the arrival of the Chief (your man) will definitely happen' (*mull*:17, 20).

No person-number-gender distinction is made by the causal. The difference between affirmation and negation is not made by the causal suffix, but by the verbal noun to which the causal suffix is appended.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: verbal noun in **al/āl/kal/tal/mai + ān/in**

Suffix Structure and Example

ān:

(verbal noun in **al + ān**)

kollai kural vānki īṇā malai vāṇnar alla purintu **olūkalān** (*kali.39:13-14*)
 [olū(ku) 'to conduct oneself, behave'; olūkal 'behavior']
 'With their sheaves bent, the (millet) fields will not yield, **since** the people living on the mountain **conduct themselves** by doing things that are not good.'

(verbal noun in **mai + glide + ān**)

uṇṭāl amma iv-ulakam ... piṇarkku eṇa muyalunar **uṇmaiānē**
 (*puṛa.182:1, 9*)

[uḷ 'to be, to exist'; uṇmai 'existence';

uṇmaiān < uṇmai + glide y + ān]

'This world exists **because there are** people who make efforts for the sake of others.'

in:

(verbal noun in **al + in**)

peruṅkai ēṇṇai ... vaḷ ukir **katuvalin** pāmpu mataṇ aḷiyum pāṇāl
 kaṅkul (*aka.8:2,3-4*)

[**katu** ‘to clutch’; **katuval** ‘clutching, grabbing’]
 ‘midnight when the strength of the snake (inside the anthill) perishes
because the sharp claws of the boar with big hands are **clutching**
 it’

ceypa ellām ceytaṇaṇ **ākalin** ituka oṇṇō cuṭuka oṇṇō (*pura.239:19-20*)
 [**āku** ‘to become’; **ākal** ‘coming into being’]
 ‘He did all he could (in this life). **Therefore**, bury him or cremate
 him. (It does not really matter).’

(verbal noun in **āl + in**)

pōr etir vēntar tār aḷintu **orālin** ... perun tuṇai t tatainta kāñci
 (*pati.23:17, 19*)

[**oru** ‘to move away, depart from’; **orāl** ‘moving away’]
 ‘the kāñci trees which were disfigured **because** the kings who
 faced you in the war **retreated** (through the fields) with their front-line
 army destroyed’

(verbal noun in **tal + in**)

kalam cey kōvē ... neṭumāvaḷavaṇ tēvar ulakam eytiṇaṇ **ātalīn**
 aṇṇōṇ kavikkum kaṇ akaṇ tāḷi vaṇaital vēṭṭaṇai āyiṇ eṇaiyatūm
 iru nilam tikiriya p peru malai maṇṇā vaṇaital ollumō niṇakkē
 (*pura.228:1, 10-15*)

[**ā** ‘to be’; **ātal** ‘coming into being’;

ātalīn has an overall sense ‘since (it is the case)’]

‘Neṭumāvaḷavaṇ reached the world of the gods. **Therefore**, O potter,
 if you wish to make so large a pot that would cover him, would it be
 possible for you somehow to make it with the vast earth as your
 wheel and the big mountains as clay?’

aḷal pōl veṅkatir paitara t **terutalīn** niḷal tēyntu ulaṛiya maratta ...
kāṭu (aka.1:10-11, 15)

[**teru** 'to scorch'; **terutal** 'scorching']

'The jungles have dried-up trees whose shade has narrowed **because** the fiery hot rays (of the sun) **are scorching**.'

(verbal noun in **mai** + glide + **in**)

vaḷamaiyīn taṇṇ nilai tīrntaṇṇum ilaṇē (kūṛi:244-245)

[**vaḷa** 'to be bounteous, rich'; **vaḷamai** 'bounty']

'Neither has he swerved from his state **because of** his **richness**.'

talai p **pōkaṇmai** cīru vaḷi maṭaṅki nilai peṛu naṭukal ākiya k
kaṇṇum (pūṛa.223:2-3)

[**talai** 'end, edge'; **pō** 'to go'; **pōkaṇmai** 'not going';

talaippō(ku) 'dying'; **pōkaṇmai** < **pōkaṇmai** + glide **y** + **in**]

'even when he turned into an everlasting hero-stone, folding himself down in a small place, **since it** (i.e., his action) **was not** (meant to be) **going to the end/edge**'

(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of the negative verbal noun **pōkaṇmai**.)

yāvarum vaḷaṅkunar **iṇmai** vauvunar maṭiya c curam pul eṇṇa
āṛṛa ... kāṭu (aka.1:13-14, 15)

[**iḷ** 'to be absent'; **iṇmai** 'absence']

'The jungles have paths with lifeless forests wherein the (highway) robbers are lying low / withdrawn **since there are no** passersby.'

(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of the negative verbal noun **iṇmai**.)

vārāmai iyin pulanta neñcamoṭu nōval *(aka:25:15-16)*

[**var** ‘to come’; **vārāmai** ‘non-coming’]

‘Do not suffer with a frustrated heart **since** (your lover) **has not** (yet) **come.**’

(Note that the sense expressed is negative because of the negative verbal noun **vārāmai**.)

THE CONCESSIVE OF FACT

("although, eventhough ... ")

GENERAL: See "A Note on Participles." The concessive of fact can be translated as 'even though X verb(s/ed/en).' It provides a sense of actual occurrence/materializing of the action/state indicated by the verb from which it is derived. The action/state indicated by the concessive fact precedes and results in its succeeding/completing action/state.

FORMATION: The concessive of fact is derived by suffixation.

- (i) **ānūm** is added to a verb stem that functions as the predicate¹;
- (ii) **um** is added to an adverbial participle, conditional ending with **īn**, or an infinitive ending with **a**.

¹ **ānūm** is a contracted form of **āyīnūm**. Therefore, it is also of the structure conditional in **īn** + **um**. See "A Note on the Verb **ān**" for an explanation of similar forms in which (y)**īn** is reduced to **n**.

The affirmation-negation distinction is not made by **ānum** or **um** but by the stem to which they are added. No person-number-gender distinction is made by the concessive of fact.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

predicate + **ānum**
 adverbial participle + **um**
 conditional in **in** + **um**
 infinitive in **a** + **um**

Suffix Structure and Example

ānum (**āyin** + **um**):

(predicate + **ānum**)

nin tavaru **illānum** kaḷainar il nōy ceyyum kavin aṛintu ... pōttanta
 numar tavaru il eṇpāy (*kali.58:8-10*)

[il ‘to be non-existent’]

‘**Although it is not** your fault, do/can you say that it is not the fault of your kin who let you go (out in the street) knowing (about) your abundant/attractive beauty which creates (love)sickness that does not have a cure?’

um:

(adverbial participle ± glide + **um**)

irum kiḷai c ciṛāar k kāṇṭum **kaṇṭum** maṛṛum maṛṛum viṇavutum ...
 paci p piṇi maruttuvaṇ illam aṇittō cēyttō kūṛumiṇ emakkē
(*puṛa.173:9-12*)

[kāṇ ‘to see’; **kaṇṭum** < **kaṇṭu** + **um**]

‘We see the large group of children (coming from his residence

carrying rice). **Although** we see them, we ask again and again
 “Tell us whether the house of the healer of hunger-disease is close
 by or far away?”

kālam **anriyūm** maram payaṇ koṭuttalin (malai:134)

[al ‘not to be ...’; **anriyūm** < **anri** + glide y + **um**]

‘**Although it is not** the right season, the trees yield fruits, and
 therefore ...’

(conditional in **in** + **um**)

cēralātaṇ ... māntai muṛṛattu ... tuṛanta nitiyattu aṇṇa oru nāl oru

pakal peṛiṇum vaḷināl taṅkalar vāḷi tōḷi ... moḷi peyar tēttar

āyiṇum ... kātalar ceṇṇa nāṭṭē (aka.127:3, 6, 10-12, 17, 18)

[ā ‘to be’; **āyiṇum** < **āyiṇ** + **um**]

‘**Although he is** in a place with a different language, your lover will
 not stay for another day in the country he is gone to even if he gets
 one day the wealth like what Cēralātaṇ left in the courtyard of (his
 capital) Māntai.’

arum curam tuṇintu piṛaḷ āyiṇaḷ **āyiṇum** ... taṇ māṛpu tuṇai āka t

tuyiṛruka (aka.35:10, 11, 12-13)

[ā ‘to be’; **āyiṇum** < **āyiṇ** + **um**]

‘She (my daughter) has become a different person. **Although she**
has (become different), may he (the lover) make her sleep with his
 chest as support.’

uḷaiyiṇ pōkātu **aḷippinūm** ciṛiya ṇekiḷnta kaviṇ nalam kollō ... ivaḷ

kaṇ pacantatuvē (narr.35:9-10, 12)

[aḷi ‘to be compassionate’; **aḷippinūm** < **aḷippin** + **um**]

‘**Although I am kind** (to her) without going away from her side,

her eyes turned pale. Is it (to be called) the loveliness of her beauty due to my moving/turning aside a little?’

melliya iṇiya mēvaru takuna ivai moḷiyām eṇa c **collinūm** avai nī
maṇattiyō vāḷi eṇ neñcē cērppaṇai k kaṇṭa piṇṇē
(*kuru.306:1-3, 6*)

[**col** ‘to reveal, tell’; **collinūm** < **collin** + **um**]

‘O my heart, **although** I **told** (you) that we would not say things that are soft, sweet, and desirable, do you forget them once you see the Cērppaṇ (my lover)?’

(infinitive in **a** + glide + **um**)

nāḷum nāl uṭaṇ **kalavavum** tōḷē tol nilai vaḷīya niṇ toṭi
(*narr.332:3-4*)

[**kala** ‘to mingle, mix’; **kalavavum** < **kalava** + glide **v** + **um**]

‘**Although** your shoulders **mingle with** your lover’s shoulders every day, your bracelets slipped from their original place.’

kāṇaka nāṭaṇ **varavum** ... mēṇi pacappatu evaṇ kol aṇṇāy
(*aiṅk.217:3-4*)

[**var** ‘to come’; **varavum** < **vara** + glide **v** + **um**]

‘**Although** the man from the forest country **has come**, why is your body turning pale now, my friend?’

oṇṭoṭi uḷaiyam **ākavum** iṇaivōḷ piḷaiyalaḷ mātō piritum nām eṇiṇē
(*aka.5:26-28*)

[**āku** ‘to become’; **ākavum** < **āka** + glide **v** + **um**]

‘**Although I am** with her, she is (sad) like this. She will not survive if I leave her.’

THE CONCESSIVE OF SUPPOSITION

("even if ... ")

GENERAL: See "A Note on Participles." The concessive of supposition can be translated as 'even if X verb(s/ed/en).' It provides a sense of an assumed occurrence of the action/state indicated by the underlying verb. The action/state indicated by the concessive of supposition precedes and results in its succeeding/completing action/state.

FORMATION: The concessive of supposition is derived by suffixation. The suffix **um** is added to a conditional in **āl** or **in**.¹

A distinction between affirmation and negation is not made by **um**, but by the negative stem to which they are added. Also the main verb in

¹ These forms are structurally similar to some of the concessives of fact. In some contexts, even their significations might seem to overlap.

The concessive of supposition is also used to express probability and/or possibility, when it is followed by the same verb in a future finite form or imperative/optative form. Examples are given below. For a similar use of the concessive in modern Tamil, see Schiffman:82-83.

the sentence can be affirmative or negative. No person-number-gender distinction is made by the concessive of supposition.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: conditional in **āl** or **in** + **um**

Suffix Structure and Example

um:

(conditional in **āl** + **um**)

veñ cuḷi p paṭṭa makaṛku k karai niṇṇār añcal **enrālum** uyirppu
uṇṭām (kali.140:25-26)

[**en** ‘to say’; **enrālum** < **enrāl** + **um**]

‘For the man who is caught in a terrible whirlpool, there will be relief **even if** the people who are on the shore **say** “Do not be afraid.”’

(conditional in **in** + **um**)

koṇ perum kāṇam nacci c ceṇṇa iravalar c cuṭṭi t toṭuttu uṇa k
kiṭappinūm kiṭakkum (pura.156:2-3)

[**kiṭa** ‘to lie still’; **kiṭappinūm** < **kiṭappin** + **um**]

‘The big mountain of Koṇkāṇam **will probably be** (there) **lying still**, looking forward to the suppliants so that they could surround it and enjoy/eat (its bounty).’

(Note that the concessive **kiṭappinūm** is followed by the future form **kiṭakkum**.)

yāṇṭu pala kaḷiya ... paḷakiya kiḷamaiyar **ākinūm** aritē tōṇṇal atarpaṭa
oḷukal (pura.216:2-4)

[**ā** ‘to be’; **ākinūm** < **ākin** + **um**]

‘O noble one, **even if** people **have** the claim that they have been acquainted while many years have passed by, it is difficult indeed to live accordingly.’

‘O noble one, even if people claim that they have been acquainted for many years, it is difficult, indeed, to live accordingly.’

ciṛu naṇi **tamiyaḷ āyiṇum** iṇṇuyir naṭuṅkum taṇ ḷamai

(*pura.247:9-10*)

[ā ‘to be’; **āyiṇum** < **āyiṇ** + **um**]

‘the youth of the woman who would tremble for her life **even if** she **is alone** for a little while’

enṇāṇum pāṭu eṇiṇ pāṭavum vallēn

(*kali.140:13*)

[**eṇ** ‘what?’; **enṇāṇum** < **eṇ āyiṇum** ‘whatever it be’;

āyiṇum < **āyiṇ** + **um**]

‘**Whatever the situation is**, if (one) tells me “Sing,” I am capable of even singing.’

iṇ uyir **kaliyiṇum** uraiyal avar namakku aṇṇaiyum attāṇum allarō

(*kuṛu.93:2-3*)

[**kali** ‘to pass, leave’; **kaliyiṇum** < **kaliyiṇ** + **um**]

‘**Even if** your sweet life(breath) **leaves** you, do not speak (harsh words to him). Is he not our mother and father?’

oḷ aḷal **kuṛukiṇum** kuṛukuka kuṛukātu ceṇṇu **nīḷiṇum** nīḷka

(*pura.231:2-3*)

[**kuṛuku** ‘to grow short’; **kuṛukiṇum** < **kuṛukiṇ** + **um**;

nīḷ ‘to extend’; **nīḷiṇum** < **nīḷiṇ** + **um**]

‘**Let the fire shorten** (and touch the chieftain’s body). Or, let it not grow short, but **extend/tower high** (and not touch his body).’

(Note that the concessives **kuṛukin̄um** and **niḷin̄um** are followed respectively by the imperatives/optatives **kuṛukuka** and **niḷka**.)

ūṭin̄um iṇiya kūṛum iṇ nakai amirtu poti tuvar vāy (pati.16:11-12)
 [ūṭu 'to sulk'; **ūṭin̄um** < **ūṭin̄** + **um**]
 'her coral-like red mouth, filled with pleasant smile and nectar,
 which speaks pleasant words **even if** she is sulking'

ceññāyirru nilavu **vēṇṭin̄um** vēṇṭinkaḷuḷ veyil **vēṇṭin̄um** vēṇṭiyatu
 viḷaikkum āṇṭalai (pura.38:7-9)
 [**vēṇṭu** 'to want, wish for'; **vēṇṭin̄um** < **vēṇṭin̄** + **um**]
 'Even if you want the moon's rays in the red sun and if you want
 the heat of the sun in the white moon, you are capable of growing/ef-
 fecting what is wanted.'

nilam **peyarin̄um** niṇ col peyaral (pura.3:14)
 [**peyar** 'to move, shake, swerve'; **peyarin̄um** < **peyarin̄** + **um**]
 'Even if the earth shakes, you do not swerve in your words.'

THE NON-PARTICIPLE AS A PARTICIPLE

GENERAL: See “A Note on Participles.” In some contexts, personal verbs, adjectival nouns, participial nouns, and verbal nouns function like participles in classical Tamil. In such contexts, the personal verb, the adjectival noun, and the participial noun are like the verbal participles, whereas the verbal noun gives the sense of a nominal participle.¹ More specifically, the past personal verb gives the sense of an adverbial participle, and the non-past personal verb that of an infinitive. The participial noun, which is not basically different from the personal verb, works like a

¹ “Verbal participle” (**vinai eccam**) is a general term referring to the adverbial participle, the infinitive, the conditional, the causal, the concessive of fact, and the concessive of supposition. “Nominal participle” (**peyar eccam**) refers to the adjectival participle.

Traditional commentators have identified the forms under discussion in this chapter as **vinai ecca murru** “finite forms (that are) verbal participles” (cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *tiru*:169-172, and the Old Commentary on *pati*.17:6) and **vinai ecca vinai k kurippu murru** “appellatives (that are) verbal participles” (cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *tiru*:192 and the Old Commentary on *pati*.32:15).

participle in the same way as the personal verb.² The verbal noun, when modifying a nominal, gives the sense of a non-past adjectival participle; when modifying a verb, that of an infinitive.³

The subject of the item (personal verb, adjectival noun, or verbal noun) that functions as the participle and the subject of the main verb in the same clause are the same. Further, this item, which gives the sense of the participle, can be positive or negative. When negative, it functions like a negative adverbial participle. See "The Negative Adverbial Participle" and "The Negative Verbal Noun."

FORMATION: There is no separate morphological formation. Personal verbs, adjectival nouns, and participial nouns are formally followed or are semantically completed by an adjectival participle, adverbial participle, causal, concessive of fact, conditional, imperative, infinitive, personal verb, or a verbal noun. More than one adjectival noun, participial noun, or personal verb can occur in apposition and function like participles. Also a verbal noun ending with **al** or **(t)tal** is followed by a nominal or another verb form.

² For information on the connection between the participial noun and the personal verb, see "Past Participial Nouns."

³ For a similar observation, see R. Kothandaraman in *Vaiyai* (1975:11-13).

EXAMPLES

Structure and Example

(adjectival noun + adverbial participle)

kaccinaṇ kaḷalinaṇ ceccai k kaṇṇiyaṇ ... tukiliṇaṇ ... taṭakkaiyiṇ
 iyala **ēnti** meṇ tōḷ paḷ piṇai taḷi t talaittantu kuṇṇutōṛāṭaḷ
 (tiru:208, 214-217)

‘the dancing of Murukaṇ who, **wearing a sash, warrior’s anklets, a head-garland of ceccai leaves, and a fine garment**, leads the (kuravai) dance on every mountain, holding by his strong firm hands the many fawn(-like women) and embracing their soft shoulders’

[The adjectival nouns (= participles) **kaccinaṇ** ‘he, who has a sash’, **kaḷalinaṇ** ‘he, who has the warrior’s anklets’, **ceccai-k-kaṇṇiyaṇ** ‘he who has a head-garland of ceccai leaves’, and **tukiliṇaṇ** ‘he, who has a fine garment’ are in apposition forming the “subject” which is semantically completed by the adverbial participle **ēnti** < **ēntu** ‘to hold, carry.’ The adjectival nouns here function like adverbial participles: e.g., **kaccinaṇ āy** ‘as a man wearing a sash’, **kaḷalinaṇ āy** ‘as a man wearing a head-garland’, and **tukiliṇaṇ āy** ‘as a man wearing a fine garment.’]

(participial noun + adjectival participle)

iyalinaḷ olkinaḷ āṭum maṭamakaḷ (pati.51:10)
 ‘the innocent woman who **dances (by) moving around and swaying gently**’

[There are two participial nouns functioning as participles: **iyalinaḷ** ‘one who moves around’ and **olkinaḷ** ‘one who sways gently.’ The adjectival participle is **āṭum** < **āṭu** ‘to dance.’ Here, the participial

nouns fill the function of an adverbial participle (like **iyali** ‘moving around’; **olki** ‘swaying’).]

(participial noun + adverbial participle)

naṭuṅkuvaṇaḷ ninru niṇ eṇiyar ōkkiya ciṟu ceṇ kuṇḷai (*pati.52:21-22*)
‘the small red water-lily which she (your queen) raised in order to toss/chase you, while **standing shuddering** (due to sulking)’

[The participial noun (= participle) is **naṭuṅkuvaṇaḷ** ‘one who trembles/shudders.’ Here it functions like an adverbial participle (e.g., **naṭuṅki** ‘trembling’). The adverbial participle which follows **naṭuṅkuvaṇaḷ** is **ninru** < **niḷ** ‘to stand.’]

koḷuṅkuṟai ... **viraivaṇaṇ cuṭṭu** ... tiṇṇ eṇa t tarutaliṇ

(*pura.150:9, 12, 13*)

‘since he rushed and baked a fat piece of animal flesh and gave it to us saying “Eat” ’

[The participial noun (= participle) is **viraivaṇaṇ** ‘one who rushes.’ Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **viraintu** ‘having hurried; rushed, and ...’). The adverbial participle which follows **viraivaṇaṇ** is **cuṭṭu** < **cuṭu** ‘to burn, bake.’]

(participial noun + imperative)

matiyiṇ **tēyvaṇa keṭuka** niṇ tevvar ākkam (*matu:195-196*)

‘**May** your enemies’ prosperity **wane and perish** like the moon.’

[The participial noun (= participle) is **tēyvaṇa** ‘those which will wear out.’ Here it functions like an adverbial participle (e.g., **tēyntu** ‘having waned’). The imperative is **keṭuka** ‘**May** (they) **perish**.’ Also note that the plural form **tēyvaṇa** indicates the plurality of prosperity/wealth, **ākkam**.]

(participial noun + infinitive)

viraivaṇar kātalar **pukutara** (kali.134:26)

‘as her lover **arrived hurriedly**’

[The participial noun (= participle) is **viraivaṇar** ‘one who hurries/rushes.’ Here it functions like an adverbial participle (**viraintu** ‘hurrying’). The infinitive is **pukutara** ‘to enter, arrive.’]

tīñ cēṇṇu k kūviyar **tūṅkuvaṇar uṇṇa**⁴ (matu:627)

‘as the **people** selling cakes (soaking) in sugar syrup **slept bending down**’

[The participial noun (= participle) is **tūṅkuvaṇar** ‘those who are bending down.’ Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (e.g., **tūṅki** ‘bending down’). The infinitive is **uṇṇa** ‘to sleep.’]

(personal verb + adjectival participle ± postposition)

vēṅkai **koykuvam cenruḷi** (aka.48:6)

‘**when** we went **to pick vēṅkai** (flowers)’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **koykuvam** ‘we will pick.’ Here it fills the function of an infinitive (like **koyya** ‘to pick’). **cenruḷi** < **cenr** past/completive stem + **uḷi** postposition.]

eyiṇṇikku i-n-nilai aṇiya c **collinēn irakkum aḷavai** ... viṭalai

viraiyātimē (aink.364:2-4)

‘O Viṭalai, do not rush **until I tell** about this situation to the Eyirri **and beg her** (to go with you).’

⁴ This is an excellent example to show that **tūṅku** ‘to bend down, curve down’ and **uṇṇa** ‘to sleep’ were distinct verbs in classical Tamil. In modern Tamil both mean ‘to sleep.’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **collinēn** 'I told.' Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **colli** 'told and ...'). **irakkum** is the adjectival participle < **ira** 'to beg'; **aḷavai** is the postposition. **irakkum aḷavai** 'until (I) beg her.']

nīla nākam nalkiya kalīṅkam āl amar celvaṅku **amarntanaṅ koṭutta**
... āy (cīru:96-97, 99)

'Āy, **who willingly gave** to the Lord, who is sitting under the banyan tree, the fine cloth which the blue serpent gave him'

[The personal verb (= participle) is **amarntanaṅ** 'he liked it wholeheartedly.' Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **amarntu** 'liking it wholeheartedly'). **koṭutta** is the adjectival participle < **koṭu** 'to give away.']

āymakaḷ ... ney vilaikku aṭṭi p pacum poṇ **koḷḷāḷ** erumai nal āṇ karu
nāku **perūum** ... kuṭi (peru:162, 164-166)

'neighborhoods where the shepherdess (from the agricultural land) **would not get gold** (as the price) for selling ghee (to the mountain people) but **would** (rather) **get** water buffalo, good cows, and black calves'

[Note that the personal verb (= participle) **koḷḷāḷ** 'she would not get' is negative. Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **koḷḷātu** 'without getting'). **perūum** is the adjectival participle < **peru** 'to get, obtain.']

nocci **cūlvana malarum** mauval (aka.23:11-12)

'wild jasmine **which bloom surrounding** the nocci (trees)'

[The personal verb (= participle) is **cūlvana** 'they will surround.' Here it performs the function of an adverbial participle (like **cūlntu** 'having surrounded; surrounding'). **malarum** is the adjectival participle < **malar** 'to bloom.']

ilai **ila malarnta** ... ilavam (aka.11:3)

‘ilavam **which have bloomed without leaves**’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **ila** ‘those which do not have.’ Note that it is negative. Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **inri** ‘without’). The adjectival participle is **malarnta** < **malar** ‘to bloom.’]

(personal verb + adverbial participle)

uvakai **maraiyinen** etir **cenru** i-m-manai anru ahtu um manai enra
ennum tannum nōkki (aka.56:13-15)

‘He looked at himself and me, who **went** in front of him (while) **hiding** my joy and said, “This is not your house. That is your house,” and ...’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **maraiyinen** ‘I hid/concealed.’ Here it functions like an adverbial participle (like **maraittu** ‘having concealed/hid’). The adverbial participle which follows the personal verb **maraiyinen** is **cenru** < **cel** ‘to go.’]

(personal verb + causal)

citaintatu manra nī **civantanai nōkkalin** ... kāmaru kaviṇē
(pati.27:1, 16)

‘The desirable fascinating beauty (of your enemy countries) was demolished **since you looked** (at them) **angrily**.’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **civantanai** ‘you got angry.’ Here it functions like an adverbial participle (like **civantu** ‘having gotten angry’). **nōkkalin** ‘since (you) look at’ is the causal < **nōkku** ‘to look at.’]

cel inī akattu ena k koṭuppōrku **ollān kaluṭtalin** (aka.66:15-16)

‘since (the child) **was full of tears without agreeing** with (his

father) who let him go saying “Go now, inside (the house)” ’

[The personal verb (= participle) **ollān** ‘he will not agree’ is negative. Here it functions like an adverbial participle (like **ollātu** ‘without agreeing’). **kaluṭṭalin** ‘since (his) eyes are full of tears’ is the causal < **kaluṭ** ‘to be filled with tears; to be cloudy.’ Note that the stem **koṭu** (in **koṭuppōrku**) is here interpreted to mean ‘to let go/free.’ This is an excellent example which provides an insight into the relation between **koṭ** ‘to draw ... toward self; take’ and **koṭu** ‘to push ... from self; give away.’]

(personal verb + concessive of fact)

men̄ tōḷ in̄ tuyil en̄rum **perāan** **peyarinum** muṇiyal urāan
(*kuri:242-243*)

‘He is not frustrated **even if he leaves without** always **getting** (to) sleep on (her) soft shoulder.’

‘He is not frustrated even if he has to leave without always getting (to) sleep on (her) soft shoulder.’

[The personal verb (= participle) **perāan** ‘he will not get’ is negative. Here it functions as an adverbial participle (like **perātu** ‘without getting’). The concessive of fact is **peyarinum** ‘even if he leaves.’]

(personal verb + conditional)

niḷal **acaiyinir iruppin** pala tīram peyarpavai kēṭkuvir (*malai:290-291*)

‘**If you will remain resting** in the shade, you will hear many (birds and animals) moving in many directions.’

[The personal verb (= participle) **acaiyinir** ‘you will move with restraint; you will rest’ is negative. Here it functions like an adverbial participle (like **acaintu** ‘moving with restraint’). The conditional is **iruppin** ‘if you will remain/stay.’]

(personal verb + imperative)

karumpiṇ tīñ cāṇu **virumpiṇir micaimin** (peru:262)

‘**Drink** the sweet juice of the sugarcane **with a liking.**’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **virumpiṇir** ‘you liked.’ Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (e.g., **virumpi** ‘having liked’). The imperative is **micaimin** ‘Drink!’]

(personal verb + infinitive)

vār mayir **uḷariṇaḷ** koṭicci ... kuṇiñci **pāṭa** (aka.102:5, 6)

‘as the Koṭicci **sings** the kuṇiñci melody (while) **combing** her long hair (with her fingers)’

[The personal verb (= participle) **uḷariṇaḷ** ‘she combed her hair with her fingers.’ Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **uḷari** ‘having combed; combing’). The infinitive is **pāṭa** ‘to sing.’]

varutal talaivar vāyvatu nī niṇ ... evvam kaḷai māyōy eṇa k kāṭṭavum
kāṭṭavum **kāṇāḷ** ... pū p pōl uṇkaṇ pulampu muttu **uraippa**

(mull:20, 21-23)

‘Although (her attendants) repeatedly reassured her saying, “The arrival of your lover (the king) will happen. Get rid of your distress,” she **did not understand**. As isolated pearl-like tears **gathered** in her flower-like attractive eyes, ...’

[The personal verb (= participle) **kāṇāḷ** ‘she will not see/realize’ is negative. Here it fills the function of an adverbial participle (like **kāṇātu** ‘without seeing/understanding’). The infinitive is **uraippa** ‘to accumulate.’]

muṭalai yākkai muḷu vali mākkaḷ ... tuvalai t taṇ tuḷi **pēṇār** ... vēṇṭu
vayiṇ **tiritara** (neṭu:32, 34, 35)

‘as people with a firm body and wholesome strength **wandered around** wherever they wanted **without caring** for the cool drops of the sprinkle/rain’

[The personal verb (= participle) **pēṇār** ‘they will not be concerned about; they will not care for’ is negative. Here it functions like an adverbial participle (e.g., **pēṇātu** ‘without caring for; without being concerned about’). The infinitive is **tiritara** ‘to wander around.’]

(personal verb + personal verb)

mālaiyum uḷḷār āyiṇ kālai yāṅku ākuvam kol pāṇa eṇṇa maṇaiyōḷ col
etir collal **cellēṇ** cevvaḷi nal yāl **icaiyiṇēṇ** ... avar tīram **celvēṇ**
kaṇṭaṇēṇ yāṇē ... ūraṇ ... tērē (aka.14:12-15, 17, 21)

‘I, who approached the Ūraṇ’s wife as I played the cevvaḷi melody on my harp, **without being able** to answer her when she said, “O bard, if my lover does not think of us (hon.) even in the evening what will become of us (hon.) in the morning?,” saw the Ūraṇ’s **chariot** (arriving).’

[Three personal verbs function like participles: **cellēṇ** ‘I am not able’, **icaiyiṇēṇ** ‘I played’, and **celvēṇ** ‘I will go.’ Two of them function like adverbial participles (e.g., **cellātu** ‘without being able to’ and **icaittu** ‘playing’), whereas **celvēṇ** functions like an adjectival participle (e.g., **cenra yāṇ** ‘I who went’). The personal verb **kaṇṭaṇēṇ** ‘I saw’ following them is the predicate.]

alar vāy p peṇṭir inṇā in urai kēṭṭa ciṇṇāl ariyēṇ pōla **uyirēṇ** naṇiya
nāṇum niṇ katuppu **enrēṇē** (narr.143:7-10)

‘Within a few days / On those few days when I heard the cruel sweet talk of the gossiping women (about my daughter’s love with a man), I **did not sigh** like someone who did not know anything, but **said** (to my daughter), “Your hair smells with fragrance.” ’

[The personal verb (= participle) **uyirēn** ‘I did not breathe/sigh’ is negative. Here it functions like an adverbial participle (e.g., **uyirāmal** ‘without breathing’). The personal verb which follows it as predicate is **enrēn** ‘I said.’]

kāṇku vanticinē ‘I came to see you.’ (pati.41:16)

[The personal verb (= participle) is **kāṇku** ‘I see, I am seeing.’ Here it functions as an infinitive (like **kāṇa** ‘to see’). The personal verb which follows it as predicate is **vanticin** ‘I have come.’]

niṇ kaṇṭanen varuval⁵ (pura.23:17)

‘(Here) I come, seeing you (in your landscape).’

The personal verb (= participle) is **kaṇṭanen** ‘I saw.’ Here it functions as an adverbial participle (**kaṇṭu** ‘having seen’). The personal verb which follows it as predicate is **varuval** ‘(Here), I come.’]

aḷikkeṇa irakku vārēn eñci k kūṛēn (pati.61:10-11)

‘I will not come (for) begging. I will not state (your greatness) leaving behind something.’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **irakku** ‘I beg.’ Here it functions as an infinitive (like **irakka** ‘to beg’). The personal verb following it as predicate is **vārēn** ‘I will not come.’]

varuntal ... tōḷi ... uraittaṇam varukam (narr.88:2, 3)

‘My friend, do not grieve. **Let us go, talk** (to your lover about your distress), and **come** (back).’

⁵ A traditional commentator, U.V. Saminathier, takes **varuval** to mean ‘I came; I (have) come.’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **uraittanam** 'we stated.' Here it functions as an adverbial participle (like **uraittu** 'having stated; stating'). The personal verb following it as predicate is **varukam** 'We will come.']

cellal **tīrkkam celvām**

(*narr.284:4*)

'Let us go in order to relieve (her) grief.'

[The personal verb (= participle) is **tīrkkam** 'we shall remove/cure / get rid of.' Here it functions as an infinitive (like **tīrka** 'to remove/cure/relieve'). The personal verb following it as predicate is **celvām** 'We shall go.']

niṇṇ **nayantu varuvēm kaṇṭanam**

(*pati.23:11*)

'We, who were coming seeking you, saw ...'

[The personal verb (= participle) is **varuvēm** 'those of us who will come.' Here it functions like an adjectival participle (e.g., **varukinra yām** 'we who are coming'). The personal verb following it as predicate is **kaṇṭanam** 'We saw.']

eṇ **ciṇmaiyiṇ ilittu nōkkāṇ ... vallē ... nalkiyōṇē**

(*puṇa.387:20, 26, 27*)

'He quickly provided (gifts) without looking with despise because of my lowliness.'

'He quickly provided (gifts) without treating me with despise because of my lowliness.'

[The personal verb (= participle) is **nōkkāṇ** 'he will not look/consider.' Here it functions like an adverbial participle (e.g., **nōkkāmal** 'without looking/considering'). The personal verb following it as predicate is **nalkiyōṇ** 'he gave, provided.']

(personal verb + verbal noun)

cellāmō ... **kaṇṭanam** **vararkē** (pati.57:6, 15)

‘Shall we go to see (him, our patron) and return?’

[The personal verb (= participle) is **kaṇṭanam** ‘We saw.’ Here it functions as an adverbial participle (like **kaṇṭu** ‘having seen, (after) seeing’). The verbal noun following it is **varal** ‘coming, returning.’]

kaiyaṛu neñcattu evvam nīnka **alāam** **uraitalum** uriyam

(aka.113:22-23)

‘We (hon.) have the right to stay/remain without crying, when the grief in (our) distressed heart is gone.’

[The personal verb (= participle) **alāam** ‘We will not cry’ is negative. Here it functions as an adverbial participle (like **alātu** ‘without crying’). The verbal noun following it is **uraital** ‘staying.’]

Formation mechanism: verbal noun in **al/(t)tal** + nominal or verb

Structure and Example

(verbal noun + nominal)

kalam **taral** **uḷḷam** (aka.3:12)

‘heart with (the thought of) bringing jewelry’

[**taral** (verbal noun) < **tar** ‘to bring.’ Here, it functions as an adjectival participle (like **tarum** ‘that which brings’).]

viṇ **celal** **marapiṇ** aiyar (tiru:107)

‘the sages who have the legend of moving in the sky’

‘sages who are believed to move around in the sky’

[**celal** (verbal noun) < **cel** ‘to go, leave for a destination.’ Here, it functions as an adjectival participle (like **cellum** ‘those who go’).]

cēy **varal** **kānyār̥ru** k kol karai (cīru:3-4)
 ‘the eroded bank of the forest river which is coming from a distance’

[**varal** (verbal noun) < **var** ‘to come.’ Here, it functions as an adjectival participle (like **varum** ‘that which comes’).]

vaṇaintu **varal** iḷa **mulai** (pati.54:4)
 ‘young breasts which are permanently decorated’

[**varal** (verbal noun) < **var** ‘to come.’ Here, it functions as an adjectival participle (like **varum** ‘that which comes’). The combination of an adverbial participle and **var(u)** used in any form provides the sense of a permanent or recurring action: **vaṇaintu varal** ‘decorated permanently.’]

(verbal noun + verbal)

tēṛal aṛiyātu uṇṭa kaṭuvaṇ ayalatu ... cāntam **ēṛal** **cellātu** ... aṭukkattu
 maḱiḷntu kaṇpaṭukkum kuṛiyā iṇpam (aka.2:4-8)

‘the unexpected pleasure of the monkey which drank the nectar (from the flowers) unknowingly and sleeps delightfully on the mountain range, not being able to climb up (even) the sandalwood tree that is close by’

[**ēṛal** (verbal noun) < **ēru** ‘to climb up.’ Here, it functions as an infinitive (like **ēra** ‘to climb up’). The verbal form which follows it, **cellātu** ‘not being able to’, is a negative adverbial participle.]

naṭpu k **koḷal** **vēṇṭi** nayanticinōr (peru:425)

‘those who befriended (him) wanting to have (his) friendship’

[**koḷal** (verbal noun) < **koḷ** ‘to have, accept.’ Here, it functions as

an infinitive (like **koḷa** ‘in order to have/accept’). The verbal form which follows it, **vēṇṭi** ‘wanting; having wanted’, is an adverbial participle.]

vāṭtal vēṇṭi p poy kūṛēṇ (*pura.139:5-6*)

‘I will not tell lies **wishing** to **thrive**.’

[**vāṭtal** (verbal noun) < **vāl** ‘to live, prosper, thrive.’ Here, it functions as an infinitive (like **vāḷa** ‘in order to live/prosper/thrive’). The verbal form which follows it, **vēṇṭi** ‘wanting, wishing’, is an adverbial participle.]

SECTION 6

A Note On Mood

Mood is understood in this study as that which “designates by the form of the verb the mode or manner in which the speaker conceives of an assertion concerning the subject.”¹ The various modes of assertion expressed in classical Tamil can be translated as ‘X can/let/may/will/should verb.’ Among these, verb forms which express the notions of command, request, wish, blessing, and curse are described in the chapters on the imperative/optative; those expressing the notion of possibility of an action/state are given in “The Potential.” The interrogative and the negative moods are discussed in “The Interrogative” and “The Negative **al** and **il**.” It may be noted that the first person and the second person inclusive non-past personal verbs give the sense ‘will/shall’ whenever necessary.

¹ Smyth:398.

THE IMPERATIVE/OPTATIVE

("do/may ... ")

GENERAL: See "A Note on Mood." The imperative/optative form of a verb is used to express the notions of command, request, wish, blessing, or curse.¹ The basic semantic distinction one could make between the Tamil imperative and optative is that the former expresses commands whereas the latter expresses requests, wishes, or blessings. If one were to make a categorical distinction between verb forms which express a command and those which express a request etc., one will find that both

¹ Two terms **ēval** 'command' and **viyaṅkōḷ** 'taking up a mode of action' are found in the tradition to refer to the imperative/optative forms. The term **viyaṅkōḷ** is here translated as 'taking up a mode of action' on the basis of the contexts where the compound stem **viyaṅkoḷ** and the noun **viyam** are used in classical Tamil and the first Tamil epic, the *Cilappatikāram*. Note that in one context, classical Tamil uses both **ēval** and **viyaṅkoḷ**: **ēval viyaṅkoṇṭu** ilaiyarotu eḷutaram ollār 'enemies who **command** youngsters and **take up the same mode of action** and appear (in the battlefield) along with their commandos' (*pati.54:15*). This context suggests that **ēval** means 'command' that is addressed to the second person while **viyaṅkoḷ** means 'to take up a mode of action' by the first person.

appear in the first, second, and third person in classical Tamil. In addition, some forms, for example, **kēḷāy** ‘Listen’ could be understood either as an imperative expressing a command or as an optative expressing a request depending upon the context. Similarly, forms like **vāḷi** ‘May ... prosper/thrive’ and **vāḷka** ‘May ... prosper/thrive’, though different in structure, express the same sense wishing/blessing. While **vāḷka** cannot be interpreted as expressing a request or a command, a form like **varuka** ‘Come on’ which is structurally similar to **vāḷka** cannot be interpreted as a blessing. Then the questions are “What separates the two categories — semantic function or grammatical structure? Do we need two separate categories at all?”² In the absence of a clearcut answer, the two categories, the imperative and the optative, are treated under one heading in this study.

Two types of these forms appear — singular and plural. The subject of both the singular and plural types of the imperative/optative is in the first, second, or third person, and any gender. There are imperative/optative forms which are not overtly singular or plural. In those cases, the grammatical number (singular or plural) of the subject can only be understood from the context.

FORMATION: The imperative/optative notions are expressed in four ways.

- (i) by using the verb stem without any suffixes;
- (ii) by suffixation:
 - (a) adding one or two imperative/optative suffixes directly to the verb stem

² To get a sense of how the tradition acknowledges this dilemma, motivated readers are urged to read the commentaries by Teyvaccilaiyār and Cēṇāvaraiyar on *Tolkāppiyam*, *collatikāram*, Rule 219.

- (b) adding (t/n)t to the verb stem before adding certain imperative/optative suffixes;
- (iii) by extension:
 - extending the use of a verbal noun in **al** or (t)tal to express an imperative/optative notion and extending the use of a finite verb in the same way;
- (iv) by periphrasis:
 - a verbal noun ending with **al** or an infinitive ending with **a** or **iyar** is followed by the word **vēṇṭum** 'is wished, is necessary.'

No singular-plural distinction is made when a verbal noun is extended to indicate an imperative/optative sense. For information on the negative type, see "The Negative Imperative/Optative."

The imperative/optative suffixes are: **a**, **ar**, **āy**, **i**, **ika**, **ikā**, **icin**, **iya**, **iyar(ō)**, **(ī)iyar(ō)**, **(ū)u**, **(u)m**, **ē**, **ai**, **aikka**, **aikā**, **aippāy**, **ō**, **(k)ka**, **kamā**, **ku**, **mati**, **min**, **mē**, and **mō**.³ Among these, **(ī)iyar**, **(k)ka**, **kamā**, **m**, and **mō** are shared by the singular and the plural, as will be noted below.

³ Some of these suffixes (e.g., **icin**, **ku**, and **m**) occur also in other verb forms. One calls them "imperative/optative" suffixes with an understanding that they occur elsewhere also.

Affixes found after the verb stem and (t/n)t in the imperative/optative forms are here treated as imperative/optative suffixes. The semantic distinction between these various suffixes is not clear. Also some of these suffixes (e.g., **iyar**, **īiyar**, and **īiyarō**) are not different altogether, but are contextual variants of one form. For another discussion of these forms, see Israel (1972:331-337).

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: using bare verb stem

uva iṇi vāli tōli (aka.65:7)
 [uva ‘to rejoice’; singular]
 ‘Rejoice now, my companion.’

ī eṇa irattal iḷintanru (pura.204:1)
 [ī ‘to give, bestow’; singular]
 ‘It is not lowly to ask “Give.”’

annāy vāli vēṇṭu annai (aka.48:1)
 [vēṇṭu ‘to listen, wish for’; singular]
 ‘Mother, may you prosper. Listen.’

pūṇ kaṭaṇ entai nī iravalar puravē (pura.203:12)
 [pūṇ ‘to wear, take up’; singular]
 ‘Our father, take up (the task of) protecting the suppliants.’

maṭa mayil cāyalai vantikka vār (pari.20:69-70)
 [var ‘to come’; singular]
 ‘Come to worship this gentle woman who is like an innocent peacock.’
 (This form vār ‘Come’ is interesting. The actual text reads vāreṇa where vār is followed by the quotative eṇa ‘thus.’ The monosyllabic stem *var ‘to come’ when combined with eṇa should give rise to *varreṇa but has not.⁴)

⁴ One cannot but recall Tolkāppiyam, eluttatikāram, ḷampūraṇam, Rule 49, which ordains that **r** cannot occur as a vowelless consonant (**orru**) in a monosyllabic word where the vowel is short.

cel *in̄i* (aka.19:8)
 [cel ‘to go’; singular]
 ‘Go, now!’

kēl *avan̄ nilaiyē* (peru:38)
 [kēl ‘to listen’; singular]
 ‘Hear about his status.’

eṇ kai vantī (kali.85:20)
 [var ‘to come’; singular]⁵
 ‘Come on into my hands, please.’

Formation mechanism: suffixation

Suffix Structure and Example

a:

(bare stem + a)

yāy aṛintu uṇara (aka.203:2)
 [uṇar ‘to realize, understand’; uṇara singular]
 ‘May (her) mother know (about her love with a man) and understand.’
 (Note that the infinitive form would also be uṇara ‘to realize.’)

ar:

(bare stem + ar)

tēyar eṇ uyir (narr.197:4)
 [tēy ‘to wear out’; tēyar singular]
 ‘May my life(breath) wear out.’
 (tēyar could be a contracted form of tēyiyar.)

⁵ **vantī** is taken to be a compound stem. See “The Compound Stem” for a discussion of **ī**.

āy:

(bare stem + āy)

it talai ninnoṭu viṇaval **kēlāy** (aka.7:16-17)
 [kēl 'to ask'; kēlāy singular]⁶
 'Here I shall ask you. **Listen!**'

i:

(bare stem + i)

vāli eṇ neñcē (aka.149:7)
 [vāl 'to live, prosper, thrive'; vāli singular]
 'O my heart, **may** you **prosper.**'

aiya ciṛitu eṇai ūkki (kali.37:15)
 [ūkku 'to swing, raise by swinging'; ūkki singular]
 'O lord, **swing** me a little.'

(bare stem + tt + i)

paṇi vārum kaṇṇavar neñcam kaṇṇarupu **kātti** varavu (pari.6:85-86)
 [kā 'to shield, preempt'; kātti singular]
 '**Avoid** (your) continual burning of the hearts of women who (already)
 have their eyes shedding tears.'
 'Avoid continuously making your women steam up in their hearts.'

(bare stem + t + i)

muṭa mutir pārppāṇai t tōli nī **pōrruti** (kali.65:8-9)

⁶ The Tolkāppiyam and its commentators go in the opposite direction and derive **kēl** from **kēlāy**: cf. Tolkāppiyam, collatikāram, Cēṇāvaraiyam, Rule 450, and its commentary.

Note that normally the PNG suffix **āy** when added directly to a verb stem generates a negative personal verb. One has to be careful not to confuse the imperative/optative ending with **āy** and the negative personal verb ending with **āy**, since both are structurally similar. See "Negative Personal Verbs" for examples of verb forms ending with **āy**.

[**pōrru** ‘to appreciate’; **pōrruti** singular]
 ‘Appreciate the old lame brahmin, O my friend.’

ika: It could be understood as consisiting of two suffixes, **i** and **ka**.

(bare stem + **t** + **ika**)

vallai k kaṭavumati tērē **cenrika** (narr.321:8)
 [cel ‘to leave’; **cenrika** singular]
 ‘Rush the chariot fast. Let me leave.’

ikā: It could be understood as consisiting of two suffixes, **i** and **kā**.

(bare stem + **ikā**)

kōṭu eḷuntu āṭum kaṇa maṇi **kāṇikā** (kali.105:40)
 [kāṇ ‘to look at, see’; **kāṇikā** singular]
 ‘Look at the bunch of bells which swing as the horns (of the bull) lift up.’

(bare stem + **t** + **ikā**)

ivaḷ **kāṇṭikā** (kali.99:9)
 [kāṇ ‘to look at, see’; **kāṇṭikā** singular]
 ‘Look at her!’

icin:

(bare stem + **icin**)

cuṭum irai **ārricin** aṭi cērntu cāṇṇumīṇ (pari.8:79)
 [ārru ‘to appease, cool off’; **ārricin** singular]
 ‘The god will hurt me. Appease him, joining his feet. Announce it.’
 ‘The god will hurt me. Appease him, falling at his feet. Announce it.’

(bare stem + **tt** + **icin**)

tiruntilai neṭuvēḷ **vaṭitticin** (pura.180:13)

[**vaṭi** 'to make by molding'; **vaṭitticin** singular]

'**Make** a long spear with a perfect leaf/tip.'

iya: It could be understood as consisting of two suffixes (**i** + glide + **a**).

(bare stem + **iya**)

ayiraipporuna ... **vāliya** (pati.21:29, 38)

[**vāl** 'to live, prosper, thrive'; **vāliya** singular]

'O warrior of the Ayirai hills, **may** you **prosper**.'

iyar(ō): It can be understood as consisting of two suffixes (**i** + glide + **ar**). And **ō** can be treated as a particle.

(bare stem + **iyar**)

yān **ākiyar** niñ neñcu nērpavaḷē (kuru.49:5)

[**āku** 'to become'; **ākiyar** singular]

'**May I become** the one who will be fit for your heart!'

(Note that the subject is in the first person, **yān** 'I.')

(bare stem + **t** + **iyar**)

puḷ ḍoppi el paṭa **varutiya**r (kuri:38-39)

[**var** 'to come, return'; **varutiya**r plural]

'Drive away the birds (in the millet field) and **return** home when the sun sets.'

(bare stem + **iyarō**)

il **ākiyarō** kālai mālai (puṛa.232:1)

[**āku** 'to become'; **ākiyarō** plural]

'**May** the days and nights **become non-existent**.'

naṭukku inri niliyarō ... imayamum potiyamum pōṇrē

(puṛa.2:20, 24)

[**nil** 'to stand, stay, live long'; **niliyarō** singular]

‘Like the Himalayas (in the north) and the Potiyam (in the south),
may you stand/live for ever without quaking.’

(**ī**)**iyar**(**ō**): It could be understood as consisting of two suffixes (**i** + glide **y** + **ar**). And **ō** can be treated as a particle. The **īi** in (**ī**)**iyar**(**ō**) is due to the elongation of **i**.

(bare stem + **iyar**)

nillātu paṭāa c **celīiyar** niṇ pakaivar mīṇē (pura.24:24-25)

[**cel** ‘to go, leave’; **celīiyar** plural]

‘May the stars of your enemies perish without staying and leave.’

koḷai val vāḷkkai num kiḷai iṇitu **uṇīiyar** (pati.49:3)

[**uṇ** ‘to enjoy, consume, eat’; **uṇīiyar** plural]

‘May your clan / branch of kin happily enjoy the life skilled in music.’

(bare stem + **iyarō**)

varaiyā niraiyattu c **celīiyarō** aṇṇai (kuru.292:6)

[**cel** ‘to go, leave’; **celīiyarō** singular]

‘May (my) mother go to the limitless hell.’

(**celīiyarō** here expresses a sense of wish or curse.)

(**ū**)**u**⁷:

(stem + **u**)

orūu nī em kūntal koḷḷal (kali.87:1)

[**oru** ‘to move away from, shun’; **orūu** singular]

‘You move/go away. Do not grab our (hon.) tresses.’

⁷ The elongation is due to metrical requirement. See “Lengthening of Sounds (**aḷapeṭai**) and Vowel Clusters” for a discussion of metrical requirement.

ē:

(bare stem + glide + ē)

taṇ polil vāvē

(aka.240:14-15)

[vā ‘Come’ < var ‘to come’; vāvē singular]⁸

‘Come (along) to the cool grove.’

ai:

(bare stem + t + ai)

virintoli kūntāl kaṇṭai emakku p perum poṇ paṭukuvai paṇṭu

(kali.64:6-7)

[kāṇ ‘to see’; kaṇṭai singular]

‘O you with lustrous hair that is let down, see, you owe us a great deal of gold from the past.’

iṇṇum ... oru kāl nī vantai

(kali.63:12)

[var ‘to come’; vantai singular]

‘Come one more time.’

(bare stem + tt + ai)

vēy naral viṭarakam nī oṇṇu pāṭittai

(kali.40:10)

[pāṭu ‘to sing’; pāṭittai singular]

‘Sing something about the (lover’s) cliff where the bamboos make noise.’

(This is the only example of its kind. The i seems to be part of the stem. It is quite conceivable that the stem-final u in pāṭu is changed to i as a result of palatalization when the suffix ai is added — hence pāṭittai instead of *pāṭuttai.)

⁸ Compare modern Tamil vāyēn ‘Please, come’ or ‘Why don’t you come.’ In some colloquial dialects of modern Tamil, the ē is used at the end of some address forms and imperative forms: e.g., ennavē ‘Hey, what?’, pōvē ‘Go, get lost!’

(compound stem + **tt** + **ai**)

ninṇōṭu ucāvuvēṇ **ninṛittai** (kali.94:4)

[**niḷ** ‘to stay, stand’; **ninṛi** compound stem; **ninṛittai** singular]

‘Let me talk to you. **Please stay.**’

aikka: It could be a composit of two suffixes, **ai** and **kka**.

(bare stem + **t** + **aikka**)

inṛai aḷavai **cenṛaikka** eṇṛi (kuru.383:3)

[**ceḷ** ‘to go, leave’; **cenṛaikka** singular]

‘You said (to your lover) “**Let the time/duration of today pass.**” ’

aikā: It could be a composit of two suffixes, **ai** and **kā**.

(bare stem + **t** + **aikā**)

veḷ ēru **kaṇṭaikā** (kali.105:44)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see’; **kaṇṭaikā** singular]

‘**Look at the white bull.**’

aippāy: It might be a composit of **ai**, **pp**, and **āy**.

(bare stem + **t** + **aippāy**)

inṇi yātum mīkkūrṛam yām ilam eṇṇum takaiyatu **kāṇṭaippāy** neñcē

... kaṇ pāyal koḷa (kali.87:14-15, 16)

[**kāṇ** ‘to see, consider’; **kāṇṭaippāy** singular]⁹

‘O my heart, **consider** the fact that she might say that we do not have any more words (to say) so that her eyes could get (some) sleep.’

⁹ **kāṇṭaippāy** is one of a kind in classical Tamil. See “Notes on Miscellaneous Items” for a discussion of **pp**.

ō:(bare stem + **ō**)kāpṭai vāyil **pōrrō**

(narr.132:8)

[**pōrru** ‘to care for, take care of’; **pōrrō** plural]

‘Take care of the protected doors.’

(The **ō** can be construed just as a particle.)**(k)ka:**(bare stem + **kka**)vaḷi vaḷi c **cīrakka** niṇ valam paṭu koṛram

(matu:194)

[**cīra** ‘to excel, be eminent, surpass’; **cīrakka** singular]‘May your triumphant victory **excel** for many generations.’vaiyai niṇ payam pāṭi viṭivu uṛru **ēmākka**

(pari.7:85)

[**ēmā** < **ēm** ‘secure feeling’ + **ā(r)** ‘to be full’; **ēmākka** plural]¹⁰‘O (river) Vaiyai, let us sing of your beneficence and obtain relief (from grief) and **be filled with secure feeling.**’piriyātu **irukka** em cuṛramōṭu uṭaṇē

(pari.18:56)

[**iru** ‘to remain, continue to be’; **irukka** plural]‘May we **continue to be** together with our kin without departing from them.’(bare stem + **ka**)**keṭuka** niṇ avalam

(peru:38)

[**keṭu** ‘to perish’; **keṭuka** singular]‘May your agony **perish.**’

¹⁰ The commentator Parimēlaḷakar says that since **ēmākka** denotes a wish it is in the first person. The implication seems to be that **ēmākka** would be a command if it was used in the second person or vice versa.

maṇai keḷu peṇṭu yāṇ ākuka (aka.203:18)

[āku ‘to become’; ākuka singular]

‘May I become the age old woman in (his) household!’

yāvarum varuka ēṇōrum tam (matu:747)

[var ‘to come’; varuka plural]

‘Come on everyone. Bring others too.’

(compound stem + ka)

naṇṇār ... vantu tiṛai koṭuttu vaṇaṅkiṇar vaḷimolintu cenṛika eṇpa

āyiṇ (aka.124:1-3)

[cel ‘to go, leave’; cenṛi compound stem; cenṛika singular]

‘if the enemies would come (to his war camp), pay tributes, worship (him), speak submissive words, and say “Please, leave” ...’

kamā: It consists of two suffixes, **ka** and **mā**.

(bare stem + kamā)

vāṇam vaṇappiṇum manṇukamā taṇ paraṅkuṇṇam niṇakku

(pari.8:129-130)

[manṇu ‘to prevail, last for ever’; manṇukamā singular]¹¹

‘Even if the sky fails to rain, may the cool (hill) Paraṅkuṇṇu prevail for you.’

pū eḷil uṇkaṇum polikamā iṇiyē (kali.39:51)

[poli ‘to thrive, flourish, prosper’; polikamā plural]

‘Also may your eyes now flourish with the beauty of flowers.’

¹¹ A traditional commentator takes **mā** as the “optative expletive” (cf. Parimēlaḷaḱar’s commentary on this poem in U.V. Saminathier’s edition 1948:89).

ku:(bare stem + **ku**)niṇ kaṇ āku eṇ kaṇ maṇ (kali.39:44)

[ā ‘to be’; āku plural]

‘May my eyes become yours.’

(Some might prefer to treat āku ‘to become’ itself as the stem.)

(u)m:(bare stem + **(u)m**)vayiriyar k kāṇiṇ ... īm eṇa ānā k koḷkaiyai (pati.64:8, 10-11)

[ī ‘to give, provide’; īm plural]

‘You have an unending/unfailing philosophy of commanding (your servants) “Provide (for them), when you see a group of pipers!” ’

yāṇ ōm eṇṇavum ollār (aka.26:10)[ō ‘to stop, block’; ōm singular]¹²‘Even if I say “**Recede**,” he will not.’uṇm eṇa tēṭkaṭuppu aṇṇa nāṭpaṭu tēral ... ittal aṇṇiyum (puṛa.392:15-16, 18)

[uṇ ‘to eat, consume’; uṇm singular]

‘in addition to giving toddy that stings like a scorpion and saying “**Drink**”, ...’yāvarum varuka ēṇōrum tam (matu:747)

[tar ‘to bring’; tam plural]

‘Come on everyone. **Bring** others too.’

¹² Note that ōmpu ‘to shield, shelter, protect’ is derived from ō.

nīṭaṇmin vārum

(*pari.14:9*)

[**var** ‘to come’; **vārum** plural]

‘Come. Do not delay.’

mati¹³:

(stem + **mati**)

collumati pāṇa ... paṇi malar k kaṇṇi kūṛiyatu emakkē

(*aink.479:1, 5*)

[**col** ‘to reveal, tell’; **collu** < **col** + **u** formative suffix;

collumati singular]

‘O bard, tell us what the woman with eyes like cool fresh flowers spoke of.’

min:

(bare stem + **min**)

uṇmin kaḷḷē **aṭumin** cōṛē eṛika tirri **ērrumin** pulukkē ... peṛratu

utavumin

(*pati:18:1, 2, 7*)

[**uṇ** ‘to eat, consume, drink’; **aṭu** ‘to kill, cook’; **ērru** ‘to raise, put on’; **utavu** ‘to help, give’; **uṇmin**, **aṭumin**, **ērrumin**, **utavumin** plural]

‘Drink the toddy. Cook the rice. Chop the meat. Raise the things to be steamed onto the stove. Help (others) with what you have (received/obtained).’

¹³ **nalkumati** ‘give’ (*tiru:295*) has been interpreted in the tradition as used in the third person: ‘He will give.’

ōmpunar allatu uṭaṟṟunar illai āṅku **viyaṅkoṇmin** atu ataṇ paṇpē
(*malai:426-427*)

[**viyaṅkoḷ** ‘to take up, accept the way’

< **viyam** ‘path, way’ + **koḷ** ‘to accept, take’;

viyaṅkoṇmin plural]

‘Only the people who will shelter you will be there, and no one to make you suffer. **Accept/Take** the path (they show you from) there. That is the nature of the forest.’

(compound stem + **min**)

ivaḷ nilaimai **kēṭṭimin** (*kali.25:12*)

[**kēḷ** ‘to listen, hear’; **kēṭṭi** compound stem; **kēṭṭimin** singular]

‘Please hear about her condition.’

mē:

(bare stem + **mē**)

pacalaikku maruntu piṟitu iṇmai naṅku aṟintaṇai **cenmē** (*narr.247:8-9*)

[**ceḷ** ‘to go, leave’; **cenmē** singular]

‘Leave (if you want) after knowing that there is no other medicine except you for (her) lovesick pallor.’

(bare stem + **min** + **mē**)

kaṇṭu **paṇiminmē** (*pari.15:34*)

[**paṇi** ‘to bow in worship’; **paṇiminmē** plural]

‘Look at (the hill Paraṅkuṇru) and **bow in worship**.’

(Notice the stack of two suffixes, **min** and **mē**.)

mō:

(bare stem + **mō**)

iṇru varal **uraimō** cenṛiciṇōr tiṟattu (*aka.34:15*)

[**urai** ‘to state/speak’; **uraimō** singular]

‘About the man who has gone away, **speak** of his arrival today.’

tōḷi nām **ceṇmō**

(aka.32:17)

[**cel** 'to leave'; **ceṇmō** plural]

'My friend, **let us go.**'

(Note that the subject **nām** 'we' is in the first person plural which includes the listener[s].)

ceṇmō peruma em viḷavu uṭai nāṭṭu eṇa yām taṇ aṟiyunam āka

(pura.381:5-6)

[**cel** 'to go, leave'; **ceṇmō** plural]

'We informed him "O great one, let us go to our festive country" and ...'

(Note that the subject **yām** 'we' is in the first person plural which excludes the listener[s].)

(compound stem + **mō**)

celkam cela **viyaṅkoṇmō**

(kuru.114:3)

[**viyaṅkol** 'to take up, accept the way'

< **viyam** 'path, way' + **kol** 'to accept, take';

viyaṅkoṇmō singular]

'We shall leave. **Accept** our leaving'

'We shall leave. **Bid us farewell.**'

aṟam **ceyṭimō**

(pura.145:7)

[**cey** 'to do'; **ceyṭi** compound stem; **ceyṭimō** singular]

'**Please do** your duty (of righteousness).'

Formation mechanism: extension

using a non-past/non-completive personal verb
 using a verbal noun in **al** or **(t)tal**

Personal Verb

(1st person singular)

pirar vaṇ pulam kāvaliṇ māri yāṇ **pirakkē** (pura.71:18-19)
 [pīra ‘to be born’; pīrakku ‘I will be born’;
 pīrakkkē < pīrakku + ē particle]
 pīrakku < pīrakk non-past/non-completive stem + **u** PNG]
 ‘May I be displaced and born for protecting the harsh lands of others.’

(1st person inclusive plural)

ayarntīkam viruntē (kali.32:19)
 [ayar ‘to celebrate’; ayarntī compound stem; ayarntīkam plural]
 ‘Let us celebrate and give to the unknown (guests).’

(2nd person honorific/plural)

paṭai iṭuvāṇ maṇ kaṇṭīr kāmaṇ maṭai aṭum pāloṭu kōṭṭam pukin
 (kali.109:19-20)
 [kāṇ ‘to see’; kaṇṭīr ‘you see/know’ < kaṇṭ + īr PNG]
 ‘If she goes with the offering of milk into his shrine, Kāmaṇ (the love-god) will put down his weapons, you (will) see.’

Verbal Noun

*Suffix Structure and Example***al:**

(bare stem + glide + al)

peruṇ kural ēṇal **kāval** iṇi eṇṛōlē (*naṛr.389:6-7*)[**kā** ‘to protect’; **kāval** ‘guarding’ < **kā** + glide v + **al**]‘Now, **may there be guarding** of the millet with big sheaves.’

‘Now, you guard the millet with big sheaves.’

(t)tal:

(bare stem + ttal)

aṛavai āyiṇ niṇatu eṇa t **tirattal** maṛavai āyiṇ pōroṭu **tirattal**(*puṛa.44:11-12*)[**tira** ‘to open’; **tirattal** ‘opening’ < **tira** + **ttal**]‘If you are a man of virtues, **open** (your fortress) saying, “It is yours.” If you are a man of valor, **open** (your fortress) for war.’(As an imperative, **tirattal** can be interpreted as ‘may there be an opening.’)

(bare stem + tal)

poruḷ tirattu avavu k kai **viṭutal** (*kali.14:18-19*)[**viṭu** ‘to let go; let loose’; **viṭutal** ‘letting ... go’ < **viṭu** + **tal**]‘**Let go** your hands of desire concerning wealth.’

‘Take away your hands of desire from wealth.’

(As an imperative, **viṭutal** can be interpreted as ‘may there be abandoning.’)

Formation mechanism: periphrasisinfinitive + **vēṇṭum**verbal noun ending with **al/kal/(t)tal** + **vēṇṭum***Structure and Example*(infinitive + **vēṇṭum**)**vaḷara vēṇṭum** avaḷē*(pura.339:11)*[**vaḷar** ‘to grow’; **vaḷara** < **vaḷar** + **a**]‘She **must grow up**, indeed.’**viḷaviṭ celliyar vēṇṭum***(narr.390:6)*[**cel** ‘to go’; **cel** + **iyar**]‘I **must go** to the festival.’(verbal noun + **vēṇṭum**)**niṇ vayiṇ cēri cērā varuvōrkku eṇṇum aruḷal vēṇṭum** *(narr.342:3-5)*[**aruḷ** ‘to be compassionate, be gracious’; **aruḷal** ‘being compassionate/gracious’]‘You **must** always **be gracious** toward people who come to you in your neighborhood.’**uritiṇiṇ koṇṭu āṇku p peyartal vēṇṭum***(aka.10:7-8)*[**peyar** ‘to move away’; **peyartal** ‘moving away’]‘You **must** take her due to your rights and **move** there (to your village).’

‘You must take her because of your right and go (to your village).’

THE NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE/OPTATIVE

(“do not __” / “may __ not __”)

GENERAL: See “The Imperative/Optative.”

FORMATION: The negative imperative/optative notion is expressed in the following ways.

(i) by suffixation:

- (a) adding **al**, **ā(t)**, **āl**, **i**, **il**, or **ēl** to the verb stem (if the verb is not intrinsically negative), sometimes followed by certain imperative/optative suffixes; in some situations, **āt** is followed by a second stem and then an imperative/optative suffix;
- (b) adding **iyar(ō)** to the intrinsically negative verb stem **il**;
- (c) adding **al** to a non-past/non-completive stem ending with **(k)k** and followed by an imperative/optative suffix;

(ii) by extension:

using a negative personal verb or participial noun;

(iii) by periphrasis:

a verbal noun ending with **al** or an infinitive in **a** or **kka** is followed by the word **vēṇṭā** 'is not necessary.'

The negative imperative/optative suffixes are: **iyar(ō)**, **īr**, **m**, **mē**, **mō**, **ka**, and **min**. They are shared by the singular and the plural. Most of these suffixes occur in affirmative forms also.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

bare stem + **al/āl** ± **ka/min**
 non-past/non-completive stem + **al** + **īr**
 stem + **āt** + stem₂ + **m(ē)/mō**
 negative verb stem **il** + **iyar(ō)**
 bare stem ± **ēl** + **ka**

Suffix Structure and Example

(**ā**)**al**: The negative imperative/optative form with **al** could be considered as an extended usage of the negative verbal noun in **al**. The suffix **āl** is a variant of **al**.

(bare stem + **al**)

nilam peyarinūm nin col **peyaral** (*pura.3:14*)

[**peyar** 'to swerve, shake'; **peyaral** singular]

'Even if the earth shakes, **may** you **not swerve** in your words.'

mārpakam porunti muyaṅkal **viṭāal** ivai eṇa ... ivai pārāṭṭiya
paruvamum uḷa (aka.26:8, 9,11)

[**viṭu** 'to let go'; **viṭāal** singular]

'There were even times when he joined his chest to my breasts,
which he praised saying "**Do not let them go** without embracing
me." '

karumpu amanṇa tōlārai k kāṇiṇ **viṭāal** (kali.112:6-7)

[**viṭu** 'to let go'; **viṭāal** singular]

'If you see women with sugar canes (painted) on their shoulders,
do not let them go away.'

(bare stem + āl)

ūra **poyyāl** ariveṇ niṇ māyam (aka.256:7-8)

[**poy** 'to lie'; **poyyāl** singular]

'O Ūra, **do not lie**. I know about your illusive nature.'

i:

(bare stem + āt + i)

varuntāti (kali.107:30)

[**varuntu** 'to grieve, be sad']

'**Do not grieve.**'

iyar(ō):

(negative verb **il** + **iyar**)

nāṭorūm pāṭēṇ āyiṇ ... vaḷuti kaṇmāru **iliyar** eṇ perum kiḷai p puravē
(pura.388:13, 15-16)

[**kaṇmāru** 'compassion'; **il** 'to be absent, not to exist'; **iliyar** singular]

'If I do not sing of him every day, **may** Vaḷuti **not have** the compassion
of protecting my big clan.'

(Note that the stem **il** is intrinsically negative.)

(bare stem + **al** + **iyarō**)

nī keṭāa nal icai nilaii t **tavāaliyarō** iv ulakamōṭu uṭaṇē
 (pati.14:20-22)

[**tav(u)** < **tapu** 'to perish'; **tavāaliyarō** singular]

'May you together with this world **never perish**, making your good reputation prevail.'

(bare stem + **il** + **iyarō**)

niṇ pāṭu makaḷ kāṇiyar **kāṇiliyarō** niṇ pukaḷnta yākkai ... kāṭe
 (pati.44:7-8, 23)

[**kāṇ** 'to see'; **kāṇiliyarō** singular]

'May the singing women see your body. **May** the forest (where corpses are buried) **not see** your body which was praised (by the singers).'

īr:(non-past/non-completive stem in **k** + **al** + **īr**)

ceṇṇu **tolukallīr** kaṇṭu paṇimiṇmē
 [tolu 'to worship'] (pari.15:34)

'(When you go to Paraṅkuṇṇu) **do not** (just) go and **worship** (Murukaṇ). Look (at the hill) and bow.'

ēl:(bare stem + **ēl**)

ālēl eṇṇi tōḷi (aka.97:15)

[**aḷu** 'to cry; be depressed'; **ālēl** singular < **aḷu** + **ēl**]

'My friend, you are telling me "**Do not cry / be depressed.**" '

ai:(bare stem + **al** + **ai**)

poruntalai pūṭṭaṇaḷ nīṅku
 [poruntu 'to join, unite'] (pari.16:23-24)

‘**May you not join** (her). She has bloomed. Go away.’
 (‘She has bloomed’ means ‘She is menstruating.’)

ka:

(bare stem + **al** + **ka**)

avaṇ uṛai muṇaii **vāraṛka** tilla tōḷi ... eṇ neṇcē (*aka.40:11-12, 17*)
 [**var** ‘to come’; **vāraṛka** singular]
 ‘Friend, **may** my heart **not come** (back) hating its stay (over) there.’

aviyum pularāmai **maṛāaṛka** vāṇam (*pari.16:53, 54*)
 [**maṛu** ‘to refuse’; **maṛa** ‘to forget’; **maṛāaṛka** singular]
 ‘**May** the sky **not refuse/forget** (to rain) so that the offering to you does not dry out.’
 (The form **maṛāaṛka** is ambiguous. It could be from the stem **maṛu** ‘to refuse’ or from **maṛa** ‘to forget.’)

(bare stem + **ēl** + **ka**)

cintikka t tīrum piṇiyāl **cēṛēṛka** (*pari.20:68*)
 [**ceru** ‘to hate’; **cēṛēṛka** singular]
 ‘**Do not hate** the woman, (just by) thinking of whom your sickness will be cured.’
 ‘Do not hate the woman who could cure your sickness.’
 (Note the lengthening of **e** in the first syllable when deriving **cēṛēṛka**. Cf. 5.6 in “Morphophonemics.”)

m:

(bare stem + **āt** + stem₂ **ī** + **m**)

ellinru tōṇral **cellātīm** (*aka.300:18*)
 [**cel** ‘to leave’; **cellātīm** singular]
 ‘It has darkened. **Do not leave**, O noble One.’

min:(bare stem + **al** + **min**)aiyam **koḷḷanmin** āraṇivāḷir (*pura.216:5*)[**koḷ** 'to have, accept'; **koḷḷanmin** plural]'O, people full of knowledge, **do not have doubts.**'kāmam muṇaiiyāḷ alantāḷ eṇru eṇai k kāṇa **nakānmin**(*kali.145:11-12*)[**naku** 'to laugh at'; **nakānmin** plural]'**Do not** look and **laugh** at me saying, "She is immersed in passion. She is distressed." '**mē:** The **ē** could be considered as a particle.(bare stem + **āt** + stem₂ **ī** + **mē**)niṇ makaḷ ... pacalai kāma nōy eṇa c **ceppātimē** (*aka.52:13, 14-15*)[**ceppu** 'to tell, reply'; **ceppātimē** singular]'**Please do not tell/say**, "Your daughter's paleness is (due to her) sickness of passion." '**mō:** The **ō** could be considered as a particle.(bare stem + **āt** + stem₂ **ī** + **mō**)**aḷātīmō** notumalar talaiyē (*narr.13:2*)[**aḷu** 'to cry'; **aḷātīmō** singular]'**Please do not cry** in (this) place of strangers.'

Formation mechanism: extension; using a negative participial noun

Suffix Structure and Example

mār: (3rd person human plural)

(bare stem + **al** + **mār**)

maḱalir neyṭal **kēlanmār** neṭuṅkaṭaiyāṇē (*puṛa.389:16-17*)

[**kēl** ‘to hear’]

‘May the women in your large courtyard **be those who never hear** the (sound of the) neyṭal drum (that announces death).’

‘May the women in your large courtyard never hear the (sound of the) neyṭal drum (that announces death).’

Formation mechanism: infinitive or verbal noun + **vēṇṭā**

Structure and Example

(infinitive + **vēṇṭā**)

neñcam **varunta vēṇṭā** (*puṛa.101:9-10*)

[**varuntu** ‘to grieve, be sad’; **varunta vēṇṭā** singular]

‘O my heart, **you need not / do not grieve**’

iravala ... viṛaku oy māḱkaḷ poṇ peṛṛannatōr talaippāṭu aṇṇu avan

īḱai **ninaikka vēṇṭā** (*puṛa.70:5, 17-19*)

[**ninai** ‘to think’; **ninaikka vēṇṭā** singular]

‘O suppliant, **do not think about** his (act of) giving. It is not a (matter of) chance like people getting gold while they carry (loads

of) firewood (from the forest).'¹

(**ninaikka vēṇṭā** could also be interpreted to mean 'need not think.')

(verbal noun + **vēṇṭā**)

enṇatūum pariyal vēṇṭā (*pura.172:4-5*)

[**pari** 'to be concerned, worry'; **pariyal vēṇṭā** plural]

'You need not be concerned about anything.'

'Do not be concerned about anything.'

¹ The verb **oy** in *viṇaku oy mākaḷ* is translated here as 'carry.' Cf. *tūtu oy pārppāṇ* 'the brahmīn who carries a message (as an envoy)' (*aka.337:7*).

THE POTENTIAL

GENERAL: The potential expresses the notion of possibility. See “A Note On Mood.”

FORMATION: By periphrasis.

- a) a participial noun, verbal noun, or finite verb is followed by **ām** ‘it will be’¹;
- b) an infinitive, a verbal noun, or finite verb is followed by verbs that provide the senses ‘to be appropriate/proper, be possible, to endure, to fit, to last.’ The verbs found in such contexts are **iyai**, **ol**, **kūtu**, and **cel**, all of which share the sense ‘to be possible, endure, last.’

¹ Some might consider **ām** as derived from **ākum** (< **āku** + **um**). Note that in some analyses of modern Tamil, the Potential is explained as adding **alām** to the infinitive stem. Cf. Hart and Hart (1979:94).

The negative sense of the potential, ‘not possible, not proper’, is expressed by negating the verbs *ā*, *iyai*, *ol*, *kūtu*, and *cel*.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: periphrasis

Structure and Example

(infinitive + *ā*)

mālai p poḷutil nal akam nayantu tāṇ uyaṅki c collavum ākātu
aḥkiyōṇē (kuru.346:6-8)

[*ā* ‘to be’; **collavum**

< **colla** (infinitive of **col** ‘to tell’) + glide **v** + **um** particle]

‘Wishing for my good chest in the evening, he was distressed and, **not being able to** tell (me about it), was distressed.’²

(Note that **ākātu** ‘without being possible’ is negative.)

(verbal noun + *ā*)

koṭicci kaiyakattatuvē piṛar viṭuttarḱu ākātu piṇitta eṇ neñcē
(narr.95:9-10)

[*ā* ‘to be’; **viṭuttarḱu** < **viṭuttal** ‘freeing’;

viṭuttal < **viṭu** ‘to free; let go’ + **ku**]

‘**Not being able to** be freed by others, my heart is in the hands of the Koṭicci who grabbed it.’

(Note that **ākātu** is negative.)

² (kali.47:19-21) Some may interpret **nal akam nayantu** to mean ‘wishing something in his good heart.’

(finite verb + **ām**)

vem cuḷi p paṭṭa makaṛku k karai niṇṇār añcal eṇṇālum uyirppu
uṇṭām (kali.140:25-26)

[**uṇṭām** < **uṇṭu** (< **uḷ** ‘to exist’) + **ām**; **uyirppu** ‘breathing’]

‘For a man who is caught in a whirlpool, survival **exists** / **is possible** even if people who are standing on the shore say, “Do not be afraid.”’

(It is possible to consider this example [and the next] to be a “reported form of speech” lending the interpretation ‘It seems that ...’.)

(finite verb + **ām**)

uyir cekukkum pāmpum avai p paṭiḷ **uyyumām** (kali.140:21-22)

[**uy** ‘to survive, escape’; **uyyumām** < **uyyum** ‘it will survive’ + **ām**]

‘**There will be survival** even if a snake which kills/destroys life happens to be in an assembly.’

(It is more appropriate to construe **uyyumām** as derived from **uy** ‘escape’ [verbal noun] + **um** ‘also’ + **ām**.)

(verbal noun + **ām**)

in nōy **porukkal ām** varaittu aṇṇi p peritu āyiṇ (kali.58:20-21)

[**poru** ‘to bear with, tolerate’; **porukkal** ‘tolerance’]

‘if this (love)sickness is not within **bearable** limits, and grows big, ...’

(Note that **ām** here is an adjectival participle.)

(infinitive + **iyai**)

neñcu aḷi tuyar aṭa **niruppavum iyaiyum** maṇ ... naṭuṅku aṇar
kaṇaviṇāṇ aḷivuṇṇu kaṇkulum āṇṇā k kāl (kali.53:17, 18-19)

[**nīru** ‘to make stay, stop’;

niruppavum < **niruppa** + glide **v** + **um** emphatic particle]

‘It will be possible, indeed, to make her life stay, while grief destroys her heart, if she is not (already) destroyed by her dream (about you) at night and does not tremble and agonize.’

(verbal noun + **ol**)

paṇi ivaḷ paṭar eṇa p **paravāmai ollum** maṇ (kali.53:13)

[**paravu** ‘to spread’; **paravāmai** (negative verbal noun) ‘non-spreading’]

‘It will be possible that trembling does not spread like her grief.’

vāṇutal pulampa p pati peyarntu **uraital ollumō** numakkē

(aka.179:13-14)

[**urai** ‘to stay’; **uraital** ‘staying’]

‘While she with bright forehead grieves alone, will it be possible for you to go away from our town and stay (there)?’

(Note that the subject of **ol** is in the dative **numakku** ‘for you.’)

avaṇai nāṇ aṭa p **peyarttal** namakkum āṇku **ollātu** pēṇiṇar

eṇappaṭutal peṇmaiyum aṇṇu (kali.47:19-21)

[**peyar** ‘to move’; **peyarttal** ‘moving, making ... go’]

‘It is not possible for us to remove him as (our) bashfulness kills us. Neither would it be womanly to be criticized because we cared for (him).’

(Note that the subject of **ol** is in the dative **namakku** ‘for us.’ Also note that **ollātu** is negative.)

(verbal noun + **kūṭu**)

cēkkai iṇiyār pāl celvāṇ maṇaiyālāl kākkai kaṭintu **oḷukal kūṭumō**
kūṭā (pari.20:86-87)

[**oḷuku** ‘to behave, conduct oneself, live’]

‘Is it possible for the wife of a man, who goes after women who are pleasant to be with in bed, to protect him or to live by renouncing him? Not possible.’

(Note that **kūṭum** is positive and **kūṭā** is negative. Also note that the “subject” of **oḷuku** is in the instrumental **maṇaiyālāl** ‘by the wife.’ Compare modern Tamil **avaḷāl vāla muṭiyumā** ‘Can she live?’)

malai uṛai kuṛavaṇ kātal maṭamakaḷ peṛal arum kuraiyaḷ arum kaṭi k
 kāppinaḷ ... aṇaiyōḷ uḷḷal **kūṭātu** (narr.20:1-2, 3-4)

[**uḷḷu** ‘to think of’]

‘The dear daughter of the man living on the mountain is difficult to be obtained; she has a strong protection. You must not think of her.’

(Note that **kūṭātu** is negative and gives the sense ‘is not proper.’ In modern Tamil, it is understood as a “prohibitive” with the sense ‘should not.’)

(verbal noun + **cel**)

ampoṭu kāṭṭu māṇ aṭi vaḷi orri **vēṭṭam cellumō** num iṛai
 (aka.388:24-26)

[**vēṭṭam** ‘hunting’ < **vēṭṭ** + **am** verbal noun suffix;

vēṭṭ mutated stem < **vēḷ** ‘to wish for’]

‘With an arrow in his hand, would your deity go hunting following the foot path of the jungle animal?’

am malai **eṭukkal** cellātu uḷappavaṇ pōla (kali.38:4-5)
 [eṭu ‘to take, lift’; eṭukkal ‘lifting’]
 ‘like the **one who is not able** to lift that mountain’

peruṇ kaḷiru uḷuvai aṭṭeṇa irum piṭi uyaṅku piṇi varuttamoṭu **iyaṅkal**
 cellātu ... kuḷavi taḷīi ... varunti vaikum kāṇaka nāṭaṇ
 (narr.47:1-2, 4, 5-6)

[iyaṅku ‘to move around’; iyaṅkal ‘moving’]
 ‘the man from the country, where the dark big female elephant
 stays sadly caressing its calf in the forest, **unable to move around**
 because of agonizing distress after a tiger killed its big male elephant’

THE INTERROGATIVE

GENERAL: Two types of the interrogative mood are expressed in classical Tamil. One kind anticipates a reply, and the other is rhetorical and does not anticipate an answer, but makes or seeks a suggestion such as 'Shall we __?', 'Why don't you __?', 'Wouldn't you __?', etc. There are certain pronominal forms which belong to the first kind of the interrogative and are given in "The Pronouns." A few examples of the pronominal forms are given below besides the second kind, the rhetorical.

FORMATION: The pronominal interrogative is expressed by certain words which begin with **e** or **yā**. These words precede or follow the word they modify. In most cases, there is no other interrogative marker in the rest of the sentence. If any, the particle **ō** occurs at the end of the sentence to imply a rhetorical sense.

The rhetorical question is expressed by suffixation:

- a) by adding **ē** to a finite form of the negative verb **al** 'not to be X';

- b) by adding \bar{a} or \bar{o} to a finite form of a verb, affirmative or negative.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: using a pronominal form

Pronominal Form *Example*

evan:

kēṭṭāl **evan** ceyya vēṇṭumō ... avan kaṇṇi anrō atu (*kali.107:13, 14*)

[**evan** 'what']

'If (mother) asks/hears (about it) **what** should we do? Is it not his garland (that we have)?'

yār:

ivar yār

(*pura.201:1*)

[**yār** 'who?']

'**Who** are these people?'

Formation mechanism: suffixation

finite form of **aI** + \bar{e}

personal verb + \bar{a}/\bar{o}

Suffix *Structure and Example*

\bar{a} : It is not commonly used in classical Tamil. There is only one instance of it.

(personal verb + \bar{a})

tantai iṟaittoṭi ... ivan taṇ kai k kaṇ tantāriyār ... taṇ nalam pātuvi

tantāḷā

(*kali.84:31-32, 34*)

[**tantā**lā < **tantā**l ‘she gave’ + **ā**]

‘Who gave his father’s bracelet in his hand? **Did the woman** (his father’s concubine) who sings her own praise **give** it?’

ē: See “The Particles” for other uses of **ē**.

(negative personal verb + **ē**)

venrōy ninṇinum **nallan anrē** ... vaṭakkiruntōṇē (*pura.66:5, 8*)

[**nallan** ‘good man’ < **nal** ‘good’ + **an** PNG;

anrē ‘is it not?’ < **al** + **t** past/completive marker’ + **tu** PNG + **ē**]¹

‘O you who defeated (him), (tell me), **is** he, who is sitting down facing the north, **not** a better person than you?’

(Note that the two PNG suffixes **an** [in **nallan**] and **tu** [in **anru**] do not agree. **anru** serves as an interrogative for the whole statement ninṇinum **nallan** ‘He is a better person than you’, not just the word **nallan**.)

ō: It is the most commonly used interrogative particle in this period. See “The Particles” for other uses of **ō**.

(personal verb + **ō**)

mālai uḷḷinen **allanō** yāṇē ... iniyōl ... paṭar poḷutu eṇavē

(*narr.3:6-7, 8, 9*)

[**uḷḷinen** ‘I remembered’ < **uḷ**(**lu**) ‘to remember, contemplate’;

allanō ‘did I not?’ < **al** ‘not to be __’ + **an** PNG + **ō**]

‘**Did I not think** one evening (when I was away) that “This is the

¹ Cf. modern Tamil *illaiyā*? The word **vaṭakkiruntōṇ** ‘one who is sitting facing the north’ refers to the person following the ancient Tamil ritual which involved being seated facing the north and fasting until death.

time when (my) sweet woman would suffer (without me)?” ’

neṭuṇkoṭi nuṭaṇkum nāvāy tōṇruva **kāṇāmō** (*aka.110:18-19*)

[**kāṇāmō** ‘Do we not see?’ < **kāṇ** ‘to see’ + **ām** PNG + **ō**]

‘Don’t we see the ships on which tall flags sway?’

tuñcāyō eṇ kuṇmakal (*narr.61:5*)

[**tuñcāyō** ‘Won’t you sleep?’ < **tuñcu** ‘to sleep’ + **āy** PNG + **ō**]

‘Won’t you sleep, my little girl?’

‘Why don’t you sleep, my little girl?’

vārāyō (*aka.219:3*)

[**vārāyō** ‘Won’t you come?’ < **var** ‘to come’ + **āy** PNG + **ō**]

‘Won’t you come (to me)?’

THE NEGATIVE **al** AND **il**

GENERAL: The negative mood in classical Tamil is expressed in two ways: by suffixing a negative marker (**ā**, **āt**, **al**, or **il**) to a verb stem and by using in a periphrastic construction either of the two intrinsically negative verbs **al** 'not to be X' and **il** 'to be non-existent' in a conjugated form. The **al** can be thought of as an "attributive" negative and the **il** an "existential" negative.¹ Both **al** and **il** are used to negate affirmative nominals and verbals. Contextual significations of these verbs are: **al** 'to exclude/discount X' and **il** 'not to have X.' The **al** is also used to provide uniqueness to an action or noun by placing a condition on an action (with the sense 'unless, without') or by excluding a noun from others (with the sense 'except'). When a conjugated form of **al** follows a negative finite verb, the double negative provides an affirmative sense.

See "The Negative Infinitive," "Negative Personal Verbs," "The Negative Adjectival Participle," "The Negative Adverbial Participle," "Negative Participial Nouns," "Negative Verbal Nouns," and "The Negative

¹ These terms were suggested by George Hart.

Imperative/Optative” for information on the negation indicated by appending a negative marker (**ā**, **āt**, **al**, or **il**) to a verb stem. Conjugated forms of **al** and **il** are treated below in this chapter.

FORMATION: The negation of nominals and verbals is achieved through periphrasis, as is the double negative:

- a) a nominal or a verbal is followed by a conjugated form of **al**;
- b) a nominal is followed by **al(l)atu/allatai/allāl** ‘except’;
- c) a conditional is followed by **allatu/allāl** ‘except, if not’;
- d) a nominal is followed by a conjugated form of **il**.

It is worth noting that the PNG suffixes at the end of the finite form of **al** or **il** do not always agree with those at the end of the finite verbs they follow and modify. See the examples.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: suffixation

nominal + **al** __
 personal verb + **al** __
 nominal + **al(l)atu/allatai/allāl**
 conditional + **allatu/allāl**
 nominal + **il** __

Structure and Example

(nominal + **al** __): Translates as: ‘I/We/You/He/She/They/It is/are not X’,
 where “X” represents the nominal preceding **al**.

avaṇ kaḷvaṇ **kaḷvi nāṇ allēṇ** (pari.20:82)
 [**kaḷvi** ‘thief (feminine)’; **allēṇ** ‘I am not’]
 ‘He is the thief. **I am not the thief.**’

yām avan̄ kiḷaiñarēm allēm (pura.144:10)
 [kiḷaiñarēm ‘we, the kin’; allēm ‘we are not’]
 ‘We are not his kin.’

pētai allai (aka.7:6)
 [pētai ‘innocent/naive person’; allai ‘you are not’]
 ‘You are not a naive person.’

naḷi peyal naṭu nāl ... kal aṭar c ciṟu neṟi ... eḷku tuṇai āka vantōṇ
 koṭiyaṇum allan̄ tanta nī tavaru uṭaiyaiyum allai
(aka.72:2, 17, 18-20)

[koṭiyaṇ ‘cruel/wicked man’; allan̄ ‘he is not’; tavaru ‘fault’;
 uṭaiyai ‘you have’; allai ‘you are not’]
 ‘He, who came with his spear as his help through the small stony
 path at midnight when it rained hard, is not a wicked man. Neither
 are you at fault who brought him (for a rendezvous with me).’

nattuṟantōr aṟavar allar avar (aka.85:3-4)
 [aṟavar ‘righteous man’; allar ‘he is not’]
 ‘He renounced us. He is not a righteous man.’

ivaḷtāṇ varunta nōy ceytu iṟappiṇ allāl maruntu allaḷ (kali.109:21)
 [maruntu ‘medicine, cure’; allaḷ ‘she is not’]
 ‘She would give lovesickness and leave; but would not be a cure.’

puraiyar allōr varaiyalaḷ ivaḷ (pura.343:12)
 [puraiyar ‘those who are equals’; allōr ‘they are not’]
 ‘She will not choose (to marry) those who do not match her.’
 ‘She will not choose (to marry) those who do not measure up to
 her.’

kār anru ikuḷai tīrka niṇ paṭarē (kuru.251:4)

[**kār** 'rainy season'; **anru** 'it is not']

'Friend, **this is not the rainy season**. Get rid of your agony.'

pāṇāl kaṅkulum **ariya alla** maṇ ... ic curam aṭitalum aṭirō eṇṇunarp
perinē (aka.8:4, 5, 17-18)

[**ariya** 'difficult things'; **alla** 'they are not']

'Even midnight is **not difficult** for us (to come for a rendezvous) if we find/have someone who would ask "Do you really know this jungle?"'

(participial noun + **al**__)

ceṇru niṭunar allar (aka.375:1)

[**niṭunar** 'one who will extend/delay'; **allar** 'he is not']

'**He will not delay**, having gone (in search of wealth).'

(Note that **niṭunar** is a non-past/non-completive participial noun.)

(personal verb + **al**__): Translates as 'I/We/You/He/She/They/It did/do/does/will not X', where "X" is the personal verb.

uṇarkuven allan uraiyal niṇ māyam (aka.226:1)

[**uṇarkuven** 'I will understand'; **allan** 'I am not']

'Do not tell me (about) your illusive acts/deeds. **I do not understand**.'

mārpū tarukallāy piraṇ āyiṇaiyē iṇi yāṇ **viṭukkuven allēn**
(aka.396:10-11)

[**viṭukkuven** 'I will let go'; **allēn** 'I am not']

'You do not give me your chest (anymore). You have become someone else. **I will not let** (you) **go** now.'

uṭalinēn allēn poyyātu uraimō yār avaḷ makiḷna (*aink.66:1, 2*)

[**uṭalinēn** ‘I am agitated’; **allēn** ‘I am not’]

‘**I am not agitated.** Tell me without lying. O Makiḷna (man of pleasure), who is she?’

nāḷai ... matil kaṭantallatu **uṇkuvam allēm** pukā (*pati.58:5, 6-7*)

[**uṇkuvam** ‘we will eat’; **allēm** ‘we are not’]

‘Tomorrow, **we will not eat food** unless we cross over the fortress (of our enemies).’

varuvai allai vāṭai naṇi koṭitē

(*aink.233:1*)

[**varuvai** ‘you will come’; **allai** ‘you are not’]

‘**Do not come.** The cold wind is much severe.’

poruḷ vayiṇ celiṇē **niṭṭuvir allirō** neṭuntakaiyīr (*aka.239:11-12*)

[**niṭṭuvir** ‘you will extend’; **allir** ‘you are not’]

‘O, man of great qualities, if you go seeking wealth, **will you not extend** (your stay)?’

(The particle *ō* at the end of **allir** provides an interrogative sense.)

turakkuvan allan turakkuvan allan toṭar varai verpaṇ **turakkuvan**

allan

(*kali.41:35-36*)

[**turakkuvan** ‘he will renounce’; **allan** ‘he is not’]

‘**He will not renounce** (you). **He will not renounce** (you). The Verpaṇ from the mountainous range **will not renounce** (you).’

vaṇaṅkārkku **īkuvan allan**

(*pura.338:9*)

[**īkuvan** ‘he will give’; **allan** ‘he is not’]

‘**He will not give** (his daughter in marriage) to those who will not submit to him.’

maṭa nallār muyakkattai niṇ mārpiṇ pūṇiṇāl kuṛi koṇṭāl **pulakkuvaḷ**
allaḷō (kali.79:13-14)

[**pulakkuvaḷ** 'she will sulk'; **allaḷ** 'she is not'; **ō** particle]

'She inferred your rendezvous with innocent women and their embrace from the (marks of) jewelry on your chest. **Won't she sulk with you?**'

oru nāl viḷumam uṇiṇum vaḷināl **vāḷkuvaḷ** **allaḷ** eṇ tōḷi (aka.18:9-10)
 [**vāḷkuvaḷ** 'she will live'; **allaḷ** 'she is not']

'If there is danger (to you) even for a day, my friend **will not live the next day.**'

nap-pulantu aṭṭilōḷē am mā arivai emakkē varuka til viruntē **civappāl**
anru (narr.120:8-10)

[**civappāl** 'she will turn red with anger'; **anru** 'it is not']

'The beautiful dark young woman is in the cooking place (kitchen), sulking with me. May guests come for us. **She will not be red with anger (then).**'

(Note that **civappāl** and **anru** do not agree in PNG. If there is such agreement, it will be **civappāl allaḷ**.)

vaḷaṅkā p poḷutu nī kaṇru mēyppāy pōl vaḷaṅkal aṇivār uraiyārēl
 emmai **ikaḷntārē anrō** emar (kali.112:12-14)

[**ikaḷntār** 'they despised'; **anrō** < **anru** 'it is not' + **ō** particle, rhetorical sense]

'Knowing that you move around on the pretext of grazing the calves at a time when no one moves around, if my kith and kin do not tell (me about it), **haven't they despised us (hon.)?**'

(Note that **ikaḷntār** and **anrō** do not agree in PNG. If there is such agreement, it will be **ikaḷntārē allarō**.)

uyntaṇar allar iṇaṇ uṭarriyōrē (pura.100:9)

[**uyntaṇar** ‘they escaped/survived’; **allar** ‘they are not’]

‘Those who (have) aggravated him **will not survive.**’

celvār allar eṇru yāṇ ikaṇtaṇaṇē **olvāḷ allaḷ** eṇru avar ikaṇtaṇaṇē

(kuru.43:1-2)

[**celvār** ‘they will go’; **olvāḷ** ‘she will agree’; **allar** ‘They are not’;
allaḷ ‘she is not’]

‘I neglected (to stop him) thinking that **he will not go.** He neglected (to tell me) thinking “**She will not agree** (to my departure).” ’

(negative personal verb + **al** __): Note that these are the “double negatives.”

perumpirū iṇmaiṇ ilēnum **allēn** (narr.381:2)

[**ilēn** ‘I do not exist’; **allēn** ‘I am not’; **um** particle]

‘Since there is no death, **I have not ceased to exist** either.’

‘Since I have not died, (it means that) I have not ceased to exist.’

iravu k katavam muyaḷ **kēlēṁ allēṁ** kēṭṭaṇam (kuru.244:2-3)

[**kēlēṁ** ‘we do not hear’; **allēṁ** ‘we are not’]

‘**We are not the ones who did not hear.** We heard.’

īṇra tāyō **vēṇṭāḷ allaḷ** (pura.346:2)

[**vēṇṭāḷ** ‘she does not want’; **allaḷ** ‘she is not’]

‘She is not the one who does not want __; She wants __.’]

‘The mother who gave birth (to her) is **not someone who does not want** (her).’

iravalar puravalai nīyum allai puravalar iravalarkku **illaiyum allar**
(*puṛa.162:1-2*)

[**illai** ‘there is not’; **allar** ‘they are not’;

illaiyum allar ‘They are not the ones who do not exist. They exist.’]

‘You are not the protector of the suppliants. The protectors of the suppliants **have not ceased to exist either.**’

(Note that the two PNG, **ai** [in **illai**] and **ar** [in **allar**], do not agree.)

akaṇṇ naka vārā ... paricil tāl ilālar **vēlār allar** (*puṛa.207:4-5*)

[**vēlār** ‘they will not wish for’; **allar** ‘they are not’

vēlār allar ‘They are not the ones who do not wish for __’, which means ‘They wish for __.’]

‘Those who are effortless **will not dislike** the gift that is given without delight at heart.’

maṇavar ... nāṭu naṇi cēya **celvēṃ allēm ennār** ... varutalum uṇṭu eṇṇu ... tuñcā k kaṇṇa vaṭa pulattu aracē

(*puṛa.31:9, 10-11, 15, 17*)

[**celvēṃ** ‘we will go’; **allēm** ‘we are not’; **ennār** ‘they do not say/think’]

‘Kings in the northern land have sleepless eyes thinking “(His) warriors **will not say** that the (enemy) country is very far away and (so) **we will not go.** (Therefore), they might come.”’

(nominal + **a(I)latu**)

peruntakai allatu āṭavar kuṛukā arum kaṭi varaippu (*neṭu:106-107*)

[**peruntakai** ‘great one’; referring to the king in this context;

allatu ‘except’]

‘the well-guarded difficult boundary (of the queen’s private quarters),
which **except for the great one** men do not approach’

anantar naṭukkam allatu yāvatum maṇam kavalpu inṛi māḷāntu
eḷuntu (poru:94-95)

[naṭukkam (verbal noun) ‘trembling’; allatu ‘except’]²

‘waking up overwhelmed, without any worry at heart, **except for the trembling** due to lying down (indefinitely after drinking)’

niṇṇai p purai niṇaiṇṇi nī alatu uṇartiyō (pari.3:46)

[nī ‘you’; alatu ‘except’]

‘If you think of anything measuring up to you, do you know of anything **except you(rself)?**’

(conditional + allatu)

parāvaru maraiṇṇi kaṭavuḷ kāṇiṇṇi tolānir kaḷiyiṇṇi allatu vaṛitu num
iyam toṭutal ōmpumiṇṇi (malai:230-232)

[tolānir ‘you people who do not worship’;

kaḷiyiṇṇi ‘if one passes by’; allatu ‘unless’]

‘If you see the god who is difficult to worship according to tradition,
refrain from tapping uselessly on your musical instruments **unless**
you would pass by without worshipping.’

valavaṇṇi valpu valittu ūriṇṇi allatu muḷ uṇṇi munnir maṇṇilam āti āṇṇā
... kaṭum pari (aka.104:3-6)

[valittu advp < vali ‘to pull’;

ūriṇṇi ‘if one rides’ conditional of ūr ‘to ride’; allatu ‘unless’]

² From the contexts where it is used in the anthologies, one is tempted to interpret **anantar** to refer to a “hangover.”

‘fast horses whose pace will be bearable for the ocean-encircled globe **unless** the charioteer **rides** pulling the harness; but not if he uses the whip (of thorns)’

(nominal + **allatai**)

māṇ viṇaikkū uṭampu āṇṭu **olintamai allatai** maṭam keḷu neñcam
niṇ uḷaiyatuvē (aka.29:21-23)

[**olintamai** (verbal noun) ‘disappearing’; **allatai** ‘except’]

‘**Except** (for the fact) that my body **disappeared** (to go) there for (the sake of) the noble action (of seeking wealth), my heart has (always) been by your side.’

(nominal + **allāl**)

vaiyai taṇ nīr muṟṟi matil porūm **pakai allāl** nērātār pōr muṟṟu
oṇṟu aṟiyāta puricai (kali.67:3-5)

[**pakai** (verbal noun) ‘enmity’; **allāl** ‘unless it is; except’]

‘boundary wall which does not know any upsurging of war with enemies **except the enmity** of (the river) Vaiyai which dashes against the fortress with its upsurging water’

(conditional + **allāl**)

niṇ kaṇ **perin allāl** iṇ uyir vāḷkallā eṇkaṇ eṇṇō tavaru (kali.88:8-9)

[**kaṇ** ‘compassionate look’; **perin** conditional of **peru** ‘to obtain, receive’; **allāl** ‘unless’]

‘What did I do wrong? I cannot live **unless I get/receive** your compassionate look.’

‘What did I do wrong? I cannot live unless you look at me with compassion.’

anpilir akaṛir āyiṇ (*narr.37:7*)
 [**anpu** ‘love, affection’; **ilir** ‘one who does not have’ (2nd person
 honorific)]
 ‘if you leave as a **person without love**’

piṛitu eṇ vayiṇ colla **vallirrum ilanē** (*aka.32:14-15*)
 [**vallirrum** < **vallirru** (verbal noun) ‘(the act of) being able to’ +
um; **ilan** ‘he does not have’]
 ‘Neither was he able to tell me anything else.’
 (Note that **vallirru** is similar to **val[il]iyatu**.)

muṇṇum vantōṇ **maruṅku ilan** inṇum aḷiyaṇ ākaḷiṇ porunaṇ ivan (*pura.391:11-12*)
 [**maruṅku** ‘side, vicinity’; **ilan** ‘he does not have’]
 ‘He came (here) before. **He does not have a group** (of kith and
 kin) **by his side**. He is still pitiful. Therefore he is / must be a
 porunaṇ (actor).’

kuṛumakaḷ aṇi nalam vauviya **aran ilālan** ariyēṇ eṇṛa tiṛaṇ il veṇ (*aka.256:16-18*)
 cūḷ
 [**aran** ‘virtue, duty’; **ilālan** ‘man who does not have’]
 ‘the substanceless cruel oath that he did not know (her), which was
 made by **the man without virtues** who devoured the small woman’s
 beautiful loveliness’

ilaiyōḷ **valu ilaḷ** amma tāṇē (*narr.143:5-6*)
 [**valu** ‘fault, flaw’; **ilaḷ** ‘she does not have’]
 ‘The young woman is certainly **not at fault**.’

aruḷ ilar ... peru varai c ciṛu neṛi varutalāṇē (*narr.261:1, 10*)
 [**aruḷ** ‘compassion, grace, mercy’; **ilar** ‘he does not have’]

‘He does not have compassion, because he comes (every day) in the small path through the big (dangerous) mountain.’

vārātu **amaiyalō ilarē** nērār nāṭu paṭu naṇ kalam tariiyar nīṇar tōḷi
(*aink.463:3-5*)

[**amaiyal** (verbal noun) ‘staying calm/undisturbed’;

ilar ‘he does not have’]

‘He will not be calm without coming. He delayed in order to bring precious jewels that are in the enemy countries.’

intirar amiḷtam iyaivatu āyiṇum iṇitu eṇa t tamiyar **uṇṭalum ilarē**
muṇivu ilar tuṇcalum ilar (*pura.182:1-4*)

[**uṇṭal** (verbal noun) ‘eating’; **muṇivu** ‘hatred, frustration’;

tuṇcal (verbal noun) ‘procrastinating, delaying’;

ilar ‘they do not have’]

‘Even if they obtain the ambrosia of the gods, **they would not eat** it alone thinking it is good; **they do not have hatred; neither do they procrastinate.**’

eṇaittum **uṇarcci illōr** uṭaimai uḷḷēm (*pura.197:15-16*)

[**uṇarcci** ‘understanding, feeling, emotion’;

illōr ‘people who do not have’]

‘We will not think about the property of the people **who do not have** any kind of **feelings** (for others).’

akaṇ naka vārā ... paricil **tāl ilālar** vēḷār allar (*pura.207:4, 5*)

[**tāl** ‘effort’; **ilālar** ‘those who do not have’]

‘Those who make no effort will not dislike the gift that is given without delight at heart.’

‘Effortless people will like the gift given even without joy.’

(Note the double negative: **vēḷār allar** ‘they will not dislike’)

karantu nām ceytatu **onru illai** (narr.27:5)
 [**onru** ‘one thing’; **illai** ‘it/there is/was not’]
 ‘There **was nothing** that we did hiding.’

emakku **il enṇār** niṇ maṇam kūru kuḷāttar³ (pati.39:2)
 [**emakku** ‘to us’; **il** ‘to be absent’; **enṇār** ‘they will not say’]
 ‘The group (of warriors) who proclaim your valor, will not say to us
 “We have **nothing** for you.” ’
 ‘The group (of warriors) who proclaim your valor, will not say “**No**”
 to us.’

uyarnta vēṭṭattu uyarticiṇōrkku ... toyyā ulakattu nukarcciyum kūṭum
 toyyā ulakattu **nukarcci il** eṇiṇ māṇi p piṇappiṇ iṇmaiyeum kūṭum⁴
 (pura.214:6, 8-10)
 [**nukarcci** ‘experience, enjoyment’; **il** ‘to be non-existent’]
 ‘For noble people with lofty desires, experience of the unaging
 world (of the gods) is also possible. If **there is no experience** of
 that world, cessation of birth will also be possible in their next/different
 birth.’

³ Here **il** does not have an overt direct object. The convention in such instances is to assume the object to be “something.” In this context, the combination of the assumed object “something” and the negative verb **il** has provided “nothing.” Note that **emakku il enṇār** is here interpreted to mean ‘They will not say “No” to us’ rather than ‘They will not say that they do not have anything for themselves.’ The first person (**yām** ‘we’) in the dative form **emakku** ‘for/to us’ refers to the narrator of the poem, not the warriors mentioned in the poem.

⁴ **toyyā ulakam** in the phrase toyyā ulakattu nukarcci literally means ‘the world which does not wear out; the world which does not sag.’

ceṛraṇṇu āyiṇuṁ ceyirttaṇṇu āyiṇuṁ urraṇṇu āyiṇuṁ **uyvu inru** mātō
 pāṭunar pōla k kai toḷutu ētti irantaṇṇākāl vēṇṭum ... vaḷavaṇ
 koṇṭa kūṛṇē (puṛa.226:1-4, 6)

[**uyvu** (verbal noun) 'escape, survival'; **inru** 'there is not']

'Had it suppressed/accumulated its anger inside, had it shown the anger outwardly, or had it gotten to him, Death **would** certainly **not** have escaped. It must have begged (for its life) worshipping with its hands and praising him like the singers.'

koṭiyōr inru avaṇ kaṭi uṭai viyaṇ pulam (peru:41)
 [koṭiyōr 'wicked/cruel people'; **inru** 'it does not have']
 'His wide guarded land **does not** have wicked people.'

icaiyum inṇamum ītalum mūṇṇum acaiyuṭaṇ iruntōrkku arum **puṇarvu inm**
 (narr.214:1-2)

[**puṇarvu** (verbal noun) 'union'; **inm** 'there are no __']

'For those who stay (at home) with / because of lethargy, there is **no** rare **union** of the three, (namely) fame, pleasure, and beneficence.'

oru tiṛam **parral iliyarō** (puṛa.6:9-10)

[**parral** 'holding, grabbing';

iliyarō imperative/optative < **il** 'to be non-existent']

'May you **not** hold on to (just) one side (of things).'

'May you not have prejudice.'

vayiṛu **mācu ilīyar** avaṇ īṇṛa tāyē (pati.20:27)

[**mācu** 'flaw, blemish';

ilīyar imperative/optative < **il** 'to be non-existent';

mācu ilīyar 'may not have any flaws']

'May the mother who gave birth to him **prosper/thrive**.'

A NOTE ON THE VERB \bar{a}

GENERAL: The verb \bar{a} is intransitive and basically means 'to be X.' It plays an interesting and special role in classical Tamil. It is added as a suffix in its basic form \bar{a} to a bare verb stem or a non-past/non-completive stem but follows a nominal or a finite verb in a conjugated form. As a suffix, it always provides an unaccomplished sense in adjectival or adverbial participles but an incomplete sense in an infinitive. Specifically, it provides a negative sense in an adjectival or adverbial participle but a positive one in an infinitive. However, it retains the negative sense of the verb when added to the intrinsically negative verbs **al** 'not to be X' and **il** 'to be non-existent.' When it follows a nominal or a finite verb in a conjugated form, it brings the status of a verb to the nominal and the status of a nominal to the finite verb.

The \bar{a} Used as a Suffix

When \bar{a} is suffixed to a verb stem to produce certain participles (adjectival, adverbial, or infinitive), it basically seems to provide an incon-

clusiveness to the action underlying the verb of the participle. That is, if it is the suffix of an adjectival or adverbial participle, it produces an unaccomplished/immaterial sense to the imminent/potential action underlying the verb root from which the participle is derived, so the participle turns out to be negative. If *ā* is the infinitive suffix, on the other hand, it produces a sense of open-endedness or incompleteness/continuity to a live action denoted by the verb root from which the infinitive is derived.

The *ā* in Adjectival Participles

For example, consider *kalaṅkā-c-ceṅkōl* ‘sceptre **which does not swerve**’ (*puṛa.230:4*). Here, *kalaṅkā* is an adjectival participle derived from *kalaṅku* ‘to be agitated, be confused, swerve.’ The *ā* suffixed to *kalaṅku* makes it clear that the imminent/potential action of swerving did not happen to the item referred by the noun (*ceṅkōl* ‘sceptre’) it modifies. This “immaterializing” feature of *ā* must have been very useful to classical Tamil poets when they wanted to distinguish between several items denoted by the same name but with different qualities. Therefore, we find in classical Tamil, expressions in which a negative adjectival participle distinguishes an item from similar items basically for the absence of a known quality: e.g., *pūvā vaṅci* ‘**vaṅci that does not bloom**’ (*puṛa.32:2*); *tuṇvā naṇavu* ‘**naṇavu which no one drinks**’ (*pati.60:12*); *nūlā-k-kaliṅkam* ‘**kaliṅkam (garment) that was not spun** (from cotton)’ (*pati.12:21*); *vēḷā-p-pārppāṇ* ‘**the brahmin who does not perform Vedic sacrifices**’ (*aka.24:1*). In each of these cases, the item which follows the adjectival participle marked by *ā* is a noun and seems to adhere to the norm/likelihood signified by the verb root underlying the participle. The only way to separate an item, which shares only its name not the norm with others, is to say/ imply that the item under consideration does not adhere to the norm/likelihood. Thus, the expression *pūvā vaṅci* ‘**vaṅci that does not bloom**’ implies that there is a *vaṅci* which follows the norm and does bloom. It may be noted

that the **vañci** which follows the norm is a flowering plant. So **pūvā vañci** refers to the capital city **Vañci** of a Tamil king whereas the other **vañci** refers to a flowering vine.¹ Similarly, while **tuvvā naṛavu** refers to an old town by the name of **Naṛavu**, the other **naṛavu** refers to honey or liquor which is consumed; **nūlā k kaliṅkam** refers to a silk garment which is produced by not spinning cotton. And while **vēḷā-p-pārppān** singles out a **pārppān** 'brahmin' who does not perform Vedic sacrifices, another **pārppān** is referred to as being involved in a Vedic sacrifice: **amarar vēḷvi p pākam uṇṭa ... pārppān** 'he who ate the offering made by the immortal gods at the sacrifice' (*pari.5:26-27*).² Thus, as observed in all these cases, the **ā** occurring as the negative adjectival participle suffix implies the unaccomplished/immaterialized nature of an imminent action.³

The ā in Adverbial Participles

Consider **pūvē ... taṇ uṇ viḷumam aṛiyā meṇ mela t teṇ katir iṇ tuyil pacu vāy tiṛakkum** 'The flowers, **without realizing** the grief they are about to experience, slowly and gently open their fresh mouths in their pleasant sleep in the light of the destructive rays (of the sun)' (*naṛṇ.275:2, 4-5*). Here, **ā** is the suffix in the negative adverbial participle **aṛiyā** derived from **aṛi** 'to know, realize', and it serves to indicate the unaccomplished aspect of the potential action of knowing denoted by the verb **aṛi** from which the participle is derived. Note that there are two actions, one

¹ Compare **pūvā vañciyil pūṭṭa vañci** 'Vañci (flowers) which blossomed in (the city of) Vañci which does not bloom' (*cilap.26:50*).

² Some other types of **pārppān** are referred to as messengers and those who perform rituals: **tūtu oy pārppān** 'pārppān who goes as a messenger' (*aka.337:7*); **paṭiva-p-pārppān** 'pārppān who observes a penance/ritual' (*mull:37*).

³ This poetic technique of negation using negative adjectival participles is frequently employed in later Tamil poetry, especially in medieval poetry.

indicated by the participle (**aṛiyā** ‘without realizing/knowing’) and the other by the finite verb following the participle (**tīrakkum** ‘it opens; they open’). The **ā** is attached to the verb denoting the first action (**aṛi**) which is potential but has not materialized and is followed by a subsequent action (**tīra**). Specifically, the **ā** here marks the unaccomplished potential action and serves as a fluid demarcation between that action and a subsequent action. One can say that the first action develops into or materializes as the next.⁴

Now, consider a different type of **ā** used in *iṇṇicai ōrā iruntaṇam* ‘We were sitting down **listening** to the sweet music’ (*aka.388:9*). Here, **ā** marks the infinitive **ōrā** which is derived from **ōr** ‘to listen.’ There are two actions, one indicated by the infinitive (**ōrā** ‘listening’) and the other by the verb (**iruntaṇam** ‘we were sitting down’) following the infinitive. The action of listening has not come to a conclusion and is accompanied by the action of sitting down. The **ā** is attached to the verb denoting the ongoing action (**ōr** ‘to listen’) while there is another action/state (**iru** ‘to stay, sit down’). Here, **ā** as the infinitive suffix implies a flowing connection between two concurrent or overlapping actions or states of being, namely the action of listening and the state of sitting down.

This type of affirmative **ā** at the end of an infinitive is used to connect more than two concurrent or overlapping actions as witnessed in **pārā k kuṛalā p paṇiyā** ... **yār iyaṇ niṇṇīr eṇa k kūri** ‘he **looked, blabbered, stooped**, and said, “Who are you standing here?”’ (*kali.65:10-11*). Literally, it translates as ‘**looking, blabbering, stooping**, he said, “Who are you standing here?,” and’ There are three concurrent or overlapping actions (looking, blabbering, and stooping) marked by **ā** (**pārā, kuṛalā, and paṇiyā**) and they are accompanied by the final action (**kūru** ‘state, speak’).

⁴ Compare *ūr aṛiyal ākā kiṭantaṇa* ‘The towns were lying still **without being known**’ from a later text, *muttolḷāyiram 116:2*, where the **ā** suffixed to **ā(ku)** ‘to be(come)’ also provides a negative sense.

It can be said that ā in such instances marks one or more unfinished actions and serves as a conduit between them and the succeeding/concluding action (**kūru** 'to state').

Traditional Treatment of ā as a Suffix

There is no structural indicator to separate the two kinds of ā occurring in verbal participles—one marking unaccomplished/immaterialized actions (in negative adverbial participles) and the other marking ongoing actions (in the infinitives). Both are followed by another verb. Context determines the meaning in such cases.

Traditional commentators interpret both forms (those denoting unaccomplished/ immaterialized actions and those denoting ongoing actions) as "verbal participles," but resolve the ambiguity by keeping the ā in certain forms and removing the ā from certain other forms. They keep the ā in their translation of the form indicating an unaccomplished/immaterialized action through a negative adverbial participle to convey the negative sense. They remove the ā from the form denoting an ongoing action and change the infinitive into a positive adverbial participle or an infinitive with a different suffix: cf. Pinnattur Narayanasamy Aiyer's translation of **aṟiyā** (*naṟṟ.275:4*) as **ārāyāmal** where the original ā is retained in the suffix **āmal**; P.V. Somasundaranar's translation of **ōrā** (*aka.388:9*) as **uṇarntu** 'understanding' which is an affirmative adverbial participle and does not contain the original suffix ā. U.V. Saminathier interprets an infinitive with the suffix ā (**orāa** 'as ... steps aside') as an infinitive with the suffix **a: oruva** (*pati.72:9*). Similar translations can be found in the cases of **vāy vāḷā** **niṇṇāḷ** 'she stood without saying anything' (*pari.20:46*), **uraiyā** 'stating; making a statement' (*aka.5:19*), **nilam kiḷaiyā** 'scratching the floor' (*aka.16:15*), etc. Thus, it is clear that in medieval and later traditional commentaries, the classical Tamil negative adverbial participle suffix ā is reformed as **ātu** or **āmal** (e.g., **aṟiyātu** or **aṟiyāmal** 'without knowing'),

whereas the classical Tamil infinitive suffix **ā** is reformed as an adverbial participle suffix **i**, **u**, or **y** (e.g., **pāṭi** ‘sang and ...’; **unarntu** ‘knowing’; **pōy** ‘having gone; went and ...’) or as an infinitive with the suffix **a** (e.g., **oruva**).

It may be pointed out here that precisely because of the structural ambiguity presented by the **ā** occurring as a verbal participle suffix in classical Tamil, there seem to exist two different interpretations when a verbal participle ending with **ā** is followed by a conjugated form of the verb **nil** ‘to stand, stay.’ Consider **vāy vālā ninrāl** ‘she stood without speaking’ (*pari.20:46*) and **vārā ninraṇaḷ** ‘she is coming’ (*aink.397:3*), where both examples contain a verbal participle in **ā** followed by a conjugated form of **nil**. Normally, the former (**vālā ninrāl**) is understood as conveying a negative sense and the latter (**vārā ninraṇaḷ**) as conveying an affirmative sense. There is no reason why both cannot be construed as giving a “negative” sense to denote the unaccomplished/immaterialized aspect of the verb underlying the participles **vālā** and **vārā**: **vāy vālā ninrāl** ‘she stood without speaking’ and **vārā ninraṇaḷ** ‘she stayed (back) without yet coming.’

The problem in this situation is that these are the only two attestations in classical Tamil with the structure, verbal participle in **ā** + conjugated form of **nil**. To add to the obscurity of the situation, the verb (***vāl**) underlying the form **vālā** is not attested in an affirmative form for comparison (e.g., **vāy *vālīnāl** ‘she was able to speak’). Compare the only other instance where it occurs, again with a negative sense: **vāy vālēn nirpa** ‘as I stood without speaking’ (*kali.65:15*). Therefore, in the tradition, **vālā** has always been understood as a negative form. Contrary to this, the verb (**var** ‘to come’) underlying the form **vārā** is attested also in affirmative forms (e.g., **varum** ‘it will come’ *narr.89:9*). Therefore, **vārā** has been understood as a negative form when occurring as an adjectival participle (e.g., **vārā vankaṇāḷar** ‘heartless person who has not come’ *narr.89:9-10*)

but as a positive form when followed by the verb **nil** (e.g., **vārā ninraṇaḷ** ‘she is coming’ *aink.397:3*).

Actually, a few things seem to be operative here. The fact that affirmative forms of ***vāḷ** are not attested in classical Tamil has contributed to the constant negative interpretation of **vālā ninrāl**. On the other hand, the context of the poem in which **vārā ninraṇaḷ** (*aink.397:3*) occurs has led to its constant positive understanding. The context of **vārā ninraṇaḷ** is that an eloped heroine sends a message for her kith and kin through some strangers whom she met on the way. The oldest commentary on this poem does not provide a translation of **vārā ninraṇaḷ**, which has nevertheless been understood as a positive form by later scholars.⁵

The semantics of the verb **nil** ‘to stand’, which represents a steady state, seems to have contributed to the understanding of its combination with ā (as ānil) as marking an ongoing action, consequently making the participle marked by ā understood as positive. Therefore, we see medieval grammarians positing ā**inru** (ā + **nil** + **tu**) as a present tense marker.⁶ Traditional commentators on classical Tamil poetry follow this rule — hence, the modern understanding of **vārā ninraṇaḷ** as a positive form.

As pointed out above, both **vālā ninrāl** and **vārā ninraṇaḷ** can be understood as expressing an action that was about to begin (vāy ***vāḷ** ‘to be able to speak’; **var** ‘to come, arrive’). Once the action underlying the participle is accomplished/materialized, a different marker (e.g., **u**) may be used: cf. **vantu ninraṇaṇ** ‘he has arrived’ (*narr.267:12*).⁷ Unfortunately, no similar example (***vāḷi**) is attested in the case of ***vāḷ**. In the case of

⁵ Naturally, if one were to follow the Tamil tradition, in the context of this poem where the eloped heroine is expected to return home, **vārā ninraṇaḷ** cannot simply be interpreted as conveying a negative sense.

⁶ Cf. Nannūḷ, Rule 143.

⁷ These are the markers (**i**, **y**, or **u**) that occur as suffixes at the end of full-fledged adverbial participle forms.

negative adverbial participles ending with the suffix *ā*, classical Tamil poems do have alternate forms: e.g., **eyyātu** viṭutalō koṭitē ‘It would be truly cruel, if we let mother **not know** about your lovesickness’ (*aiṅk.242:3*).⁸

The Verb *ā* Following a Nominal or a Finite Verb

When following a nominal or a finite verb, *ā* implies a past state of being prior to the state of being signified by the nominal or finite verb. It accomplishes/materializes/completes the state of being or the process signified by the nominal or finite verb. Consequently, it paves a way for subsequent states of being or processes. Actually, the finite verb which *ā* follows can be construed as a participial noun type of nominal.

EXAMPLES

ā: as a suffix.

(bare stem + *ā*; adjectival participle)

kalaṅkā c ceṅkōl (*puṛa.230:4*)

[**kalaṅkā** adjp < **kalaṅku** ‘to be agitated, be confused’ + *ā*;
ceṅkōl ‘perfect staff, sceptre’]

‘**perfect staff/sceptre which does not swerve**’

(Note that *ā* here gives a negative sense.)

(bare stem + glide + *ā*; adjectival participle)

nī vāḷtal iṭyā vaḷaṇ aṟu paitiram (*pati.19:17-18*)

⁸ See “Negative Adverbial Participles” for more.

[**vāḷtal** ‘living, life’; **īyā** adjp < **ī** ‘to bestow, provide’ + glide **y** + **ā**
paitiram ‘green fields’]
 ‘unfertile enemy lands for which you do not provide a (good) life’
 (Note that **ā** here gives a negative sense.)

(non-past/non-completive stem in **k** + **ā**; adjectival participle)

īrkku itai **pōkā** ēr ila vaṇa **mulai** (*poru*:36)
 [**pōkā** < **pōk** non-past stem of **pō** ‘to go, enter’ + **ā**;
īrkku ‘straw’; **mulai** ‘breasts’]
 ‘beautiful young breasts between which (even) a straw cannot go’
 (Note that **ā** here gives a negative sense.)

(bare stem + **ā**; adjectival participle)

naṇ **vāy** **allā** **vāḷkkai** (*narr*.46:10)
 [**vāy** verbal noun < **vāy** ‘to happen, to be true’;
allā adjp < **al** ‘not to be X’ + **ā**; **vāḷkkai** ‘life, living’]
 ‘life without good opportunities’
 ‘life which is not (an opportunity for) the occurrence of good things’
 (Note that **ā** here retains the negative sense of the stem **al** which is intrinsically negative.)

(bare stem + **ā**; adjectival participle)

vāy **allā** **veṇmai** (*kali*.88:6)
 [**vāy** ‘truth, reality’; **allā** adjp < **al** ‘not to be X’ + **ā**;
veṇmai ‘whiteness, naivete, honesty’]
 ‘honesty that is not real’
 (Note that **ā** here retains the negative sense of the stem **al** which is intrinsically negative.)

(bare stem + ā; adjectival participle)

karavu illā k kavi vaṇ kai

(*puṛa.377:8*)

[**karavu** ‘hiding, concealing’;

illā adjp < **il** ‘to be non-existent’ + **ā**; **kai** ‘hand’]

‘rich **hand** which is folded down and **which does not have concealing**’

‘rich hand which does not know to refuse to give’

(Note that **ā** here retains the negative sense of the stem **il** which is intrinsically negative.)

(bare stem + ā; adjectival participle)

tam alatu illā nam nayantu aruḷi iṇṇum vārār āyiṇum (*naṛr.189:1-2*)

[**tam** oblique of **tām** ‘he’; **alatu** ‘besides, except’;

illā adjp < **il** ‘to be non-existent’ + **ā**; **nam** oblique of **nām** ‘we’]

‘although he has not yet come thinking of **us who cannot exist without him**’

(Note that **tam alatu illā nām** literally means ‘we who do not exist without him.’ Also note that **ā** here retains the negative sense of the stem **il** which is intrinsically negative.)

(bare stem + ā; adverbial participle)

pākaṇum nīṭṭittāy eṇṇu kaṭāam kaṭum tiṇ tēr **pūṭṭu viṭāa** niṭuttu

(*kali.66:23-25*)

[**pūṭṭu** ‘locking, lock’; **viṭāa** advp < **viṭu** ‘to let go, release’ + **ā**]⁹

⁹ Compare **piriyātu irukka** em cuṛamōṭu uṭaṇē ‘May we continue to be together with our kin **without departing** from them’ (*pari.18:56*), where **piriyātu** demonstrates the fullfledged negative adverbial participle form with the suffix (āt)u.

‘And the chariot driver would rush the strong fast chariot (even) **without releasing** its lock because you were delayed (here).’
(Note that ā here gives a negative sense.)

(bare stem + glide + ā; adverbial participle)

pūvē ... taṇ uṇu **viḷumam aṛiyā** meṇ mela t teṇ katir iṇ tuyil pacu
vāy tirakkum (naṛṛ.275:2, 4-5)
[**viḷumam** ‘grief’; **aṛiyā** advp < aṛi ‘to know, realize’ + glide y + ā]
‘The flowers, **without realizing** the grief that they are about to experience, slowly and gently open their fresh mouths during their pleasant sleep in the light of the destructive rays (of the sun)’
(Note that ā here gives a negative sense.)

(bare stem + ā; adverbial participle)

ceṇṛī nī **cellā viṭuvāyēl** ... muṭṭuppātu ākalum uṇṭu (kali.93:33, 36)
[cel ‘to go’; **cellā** advp < cel; **viṭu** ‘to let go, allow, give up’]
‘Go. **If you give up going** (to your other women), there will even be an obstacle.’
‘Go. If you don’t go (to your other women), it will be difficult to join them later.’
(Note that ā here gives a negative sense.)

(bare stem + ā; infinitive)

innicai ōrā iruntanam (aka.388:9)
[**innicai** ‘sweet music’; **ōrā** advp < ōr ‘to listen’ + ā;
iru ‘to be, stay, sit’]
‘We were **sitting down listening** to the sweet music.’
(Note that ā here gives a positive sense.)

(bare stem + ā; infinitive)

mukam iṛaiñci nilam **kiḷaiyā** ... tiruntuka mātō num celavu eṇa
veytuyirā ... evvamoṭu aḷinta peru vituppu uṛuvi

(aka.299:13, 18-21)

[nilam **kiḷai** 'to scratch the ground'; **veytuyir** 'to sigh']

'the distressed woman, who pined with grief **while** stooping her head and **scratching the ground**, **sighed and** said (to me), "May your task be perfect!." '

ā: following a nominal or a finite verb.

(adjectival noun + adjectival participle of ā)

kāṇal am peruntuṛai c cil **cevittu ākiya puṇarcci** alar eḷa (aka.90:3-4)
[**cevittu** 'that which is in the ear'; **ākiya** (adjp) 'that which is';
puṇarcci 'union']

'as our **union which was** (only) in a few ears emerged as a gossip ...'

'Only a few people first heard about the union between me and my lover. Later it became the gossip of the town.'

(verbal noun + adjectival participle of ā)

yāvarum **kāṇal ākā māṇ eḷil ākam** (aka.220:8-9)

[**kāṇal** (verbal noun) 'seeing';

ākā (adjp) 'that which does not become'; **ākam** 'chest']

'the beautiful elegant **chest** (of the woman you love) **which cannot be seen** by everyone'

(adjectival noun + adverbial participle of ā)

arum poruḷ **vēṭkaiyam āki** niṇ tuṟantu peruṇ kal atar iṭai p pirinta
kālai (aīnk.359:1-2)

[**vēṭkaiyam** ‘we (hon.), with a desire’; **āki** ‘having become __ ’]
‘**having become a person with desire** for precious wealth, when I
renounced you and departed / went through the big stony path’

putalvaṇ iṇṇeṇa p peyar peyarttu ... **mutu peṇṭu āki** t tuṇcutiyō¹⁰
(narr.370:5-7)

[**mutu peṇṭu** ‘experienced/old woman’; **āki** ‘having become __ ’]
‘Having given birth to a son and received a different name, are you
resting **because you have become an experienced/old woman?**’

eṇṇāl tiṅkaḷ **vaṭivirru āki** aṇṇā illā ... vaṇu vāy (poru.11-12)

[**vaṭivirru** ‘with a shape’; **āki** ‘having become __ ’]
‘hollow mouth without the uvula, **which has come to have the**
shape of an eighth day moon’
‘hollow mouth without the uvula, **which has the shape** of an eighth
day moon’
(The reference is to the face / top section of the base of a harp.)

¹⁰ The phrase **peyar peyarttu** is interpreted as ‘receiving a different name.’ According to a traditional commentary, **peyar** ‘name’ here refers to the name of the phase of life that a woman is in. After childbirth, a woman enters a new phase in her life, hence the remark “receiving a different name” (cf. Pinnattur Narayanasamy Aiyar’s commentary on *narrinai*:370).

(adjectival noun + causal form of ā)

naṭpiṛku ollātu oruṅku varal viṭāatu oḷika eṇa k kūṛi **inaiyai ātalin**
 niṇakku ... yāṇ **mēyiṇēṇ anmaiyaṇē āyiṇum** immai pōla k kāṭṭi
 ummai ... niṇṇōṭu uṭaṇ uṛaivu ākkuka uyarnta pālē (*pura.236:6-12*)
[inaiyai ‘you, of this nature’; **ātalin** ‘since it is the situation;
 since it is so; therefore’]

‘Without conforming to / agreeing with (our) friendship, you did not let me go with you (when you died). You said, “Stay behind.” **Since you have become** (different) **like this**, may the noble Destiny make me stay together with you in the other world as in this world, though I am not suitable for you.’

(adjectival noun + concessive of fact of ā)

naṭpiṛku ollātu oruṅku varal viṭāatu oḷika eṇa k kūṛi **inaiyai ātalin**
 niṇakku ... yāṇ **mēyiṇēṇ anmaiyaṇē āyiṇum** immai pōla k kāṭṭi
 ummai ... niṇṇōṭu uṭaṇ uṛaivu ākkuka uyarnta pālē
 (*pura.236:6-12*)

[mēyiṇēṇ ‘I was agreeable’; **anmaiyaṇē** ‘one who is not’;
āyiṇum ‘although, though’]

‘Without conforming to / agreeing with (our) friendship, you did not let me go with you (when you died). You said, “Stay behind.” Since you have become (different) like this, may the noble Destiny make me stay together with you in the other world as in this world, **though I am not suitable for you / agreeable to you.**’

cēralātaṇ ... nitiyattu **anna** oru nāl oru pakal peṇiṇum vaḷināl taṅkalar
 vāḷi tōḷi ... moḷi peyar **tēttar āyiṇum** ... kātalar ceṇra nāṭṭē
 (*aka.127:3, 10, 11-12, 17-18*)

[tēttar ‘one who is in the country’; **āyiṇum** ‘although’]

‘**Although he is in a country** with a different language, your lover will not stay for another day in that country he is gone to even if he gets one day the wealth like that of Cēralātaṇ’s.’

innam ākavum inku nattuṟantōr (aka. 85:3)

[**innam** ‘we, of this nature’; **ākavum** ‘although it has become’]
 ‘he who renounced/left us here **although we have become** like this
 (because of lovesickness)’

onṇār ār eyil **avar kaṭṭu ākavum** numatu eṇa p pāṇ kaṭaṇ iṟukkum
 vaḷḷiyōy (pura.203:9-11)

[**avar kaṭṭu** ‘that which is theirs’; **ākavum** ‘although it has become’]
 ‘O generous one, who fulfills (your) duty to the bards by giving
 away the precious moats of your enemies, thinking that they belong
 to you, **although they are in their/enemies’ place.**’

(adjectival noun + concessive of supposition of ā)

perum **celvar āyinum** ... makkaḷai illōrkku p payakkuṟai illai t tām
 vāḷum nālē (pura.188:2, 6-7)

[**celvar** ‘rich people’; **āyinum** ‘even if’]
 ‘**Even if they are very rich**, for those who do not have children,
 there is no fruit/result fulfilling what they lack in their living days.’

aḷuṅkal mūtūr **vilavu inru āyinum** tuṇcātu ākum (aka.122:1-2)

[**vilavu inru** ‘it is without festival’; **āyinum** ‘even if’]
 ‘This noisy town does not rest **even if there is no festival.**’

(verbal noun + concessive of supposition of ā)

yākkai in-uyir **kaḷivatu āyinum** niṇ makaḷ āy malar uṇkaṇ pacalai
 kāma nōy eṇa c ceppāṭimē (aka.52:12-15)

[**kaḷivatu** ‘passing, passage’; **āyinum** ‘even if’]

‘Even if life(-breath) passes out of my body, please do not tell (my mother) “The paleness in your daughter’s attractive eyes, which are like fine flowers, is (nothing but) sickness of passion.” ’

nilam puṭai **peyarvatu āyinum** oruvaṇ ceyti koṇṛōrkku uytī il

(*pura.34:5-6*)

[**peyarvatu** ‘moving, movement’; **āyinum** ‘even if’]

‘Even if the earth **were to move** to one side / slant, there is no escape for those who destroy someone’s (good) deed.’

‘It is unlikely that the earth would slant. But it is certain that there is no escape for ungrateful people who destroy someone’s good actions.’

(adjectival noun + conditional of ā)

kāṭali uyir ciṟitu **uṭaiyaḷ āyin** em vayiṇ uḷḷātu iruttalō aritē

(*pura.210:5-7*)

[**uyir** ‘life’; **uṭaiyaḷ** ‘she who has’; **āyin** ‘if’]

‘If my lady-love **has** a little **life** (left), it would be difficult (for her) to stay without thinking about me.’

naṇṇāṭṭu p porunaṇ **nōy ilan āyin** naṇṇu

(*pura.229:14-15*)

[**nōy** ‘sickness’; **ilan** ‘he who is without ... ;

he who does not have’; **āyin** ‘if’]

‘It would be good if the Porunaṇ (king) of the good country **is without sickness.**’

‘It would be good if the king is not sick.’

nī uṟum poy c cūḷ **aṇaṅku ākin** marṟu iṇi yār mēl viḷiyumō kūṟu

(*kali.88:20-21*)

[**aṇaṅku** ‘affliction, source of distress’; **ākin** ‘if’]

‘Tell me, if the false oath you are taking becomes an affliction, then on whom will it show/end?’

(adjectival noun + imperative/optative of ā)

nōy inru āka ceyporuḷ (aka.13:15)

[nōy ‘flaw’; inru ‘that which does not exist’; āka ‘may it be’]

‘May the wealth (you are seeking) be without flaws.’

cemmal mūtūr aṛinta mākkattu ākuka tilla ... aññai cenra ārē

(aka.15:7, 8, 19)

[mākkattu ‘that which has people’; ākuka ‘may it become’]

‘May the path through which my little lady went become one which has noble towns and familiar people.’

nōy ilai ākumati peruma

(puṛa.209:14)

[nōy ‘sickness’; ilai ‘you who do not have’;

ākumati ‘may you become’]

‘Lord, may you be without sickness.’

‘Lord, may you live without sickness.’

ūraṇ māṛpu paḷaṇam ākaṛka

(aiṅk.4:5-6)

[paḷaṇam ‘field’; ākaṛka ‘may it not become’]

‘May the Ūraṇ’s chest not become a field (for his concubines).’

(adjectival noun + infinitive of ā)

yāmē emiyam āka nīyē oḷiya c cūlntaṇai āyiṇ ... val eyiṛrōḷ vayiṇ

piriyāy āyiṇ naṇṇu

(aka.33:12-13, 16-17)

[yām ‘we’; emiyam ‘by ourselves’; āka ‘to become’]

'In case you plan to leave, **so/as we become alone**, it would be good if you do not go away from the woman who has white teeth.'

aravaiyum maravaiyum allai āka ... nīl matil oru ciṟai oṭuṅkutaḷ
naṇuttakavu uṭaittu (pura.44:13, 15-16)

[**aravai** 'you who are righteous'; **maravai** 'you who are valorous';
allai 'you who are not'; **āka** 'to become']

'It is shameful that you are withdrawn on one side of the long fortress wall **as someone without righteousness and valor**.'

am cilai iṭavatu āka ... varutaḷ vāyvatu ... verpaṇ (aka.38:3, 5)

[**cilai** 'bow'; **iṭavatu** 'that which is on the left'; **āka** 'to become']

'The arrival of the Verpaṇ with a beautiful **bow on his left** is certain'

(participial noun + infinitive of ā)

ceṇmō peruma em viḷavu uṭai nāṭṭu eṇa yam taṇ **aṟiyunam āka**

(pura.381:5-6)

[**aṟiyunam** 'we who know'; **āka** 'to become']

'**as we** (became the people who) **informed** him "Lord, we will go to our festive country" '

kiṇaimakaṇ ceṇru ... taṇ nilai **aṟiyunaṇ āka** an nilai iṭukkaṇ iriyal
pōka uṭaiya koṭuttōṇ entai (pura.388:3, 5-7)

[**aṟiyunaṇ** 'he who knows'; **āka** 'to become; turn into']

'**As** the kiṇai-drummer went to his (i.e., Paṇṇaṇ's) place and **turned into** one who understood his state/situation, my father (-like Paṇṇaṇ) gave right away what he had, so his (i.e., drummer's) sorrow would go away.'

(nominal + personal verb form of ā)

ceḷu nakar c cellīya eḷu eṇiṇ avaḷum ollāl yāmum **oli eṇa allam**
āyiṇam (narr.159:7-9)

[**oli** ‘stay back’; **eṇa** ‘to say’; **allam** ‘we are not’;

āyiṇam ‘we became’]

‘If I tell her “Get up, so we could go to (my) bounteous house” she would not agree. **We/I too became those/one who could not tell her “Stay back.”**’

ciṇam māriya aṇṇi miṇili pōla ... āṇā **uvakaiyēm āyiṇem** ... am
 tīṅkiḷavi vanta mārē (aka.262:11-12, 13, 18)

[**āṇā** ‘endless’; **uvakaiyēm** ‘we with joy; we who are delighted’;

āyiṇem ‘we became’]

‘In response to the good message that arrived, **we were endlessly delighted** like **Aṇṇi Miṇili** whose anger changed/disappeared.’

aṇṇal kāṇā ūṅkē ninṇiṇum pulliyēm maṇṇē iniyē **innēm āyiṇēm**
 maṇṇē (pura.141:7-9)

[**innēm** ‘we are like this’; **āyiṇēm** ‘we became’]

‘Before we met the Noble One, we were lowlier than you (in our situation). Now, **we have become** (wealthy) **like this.**’

ciṟu cem kuḷalai ī eṇa irappavum ollāl nī emakku yāraiyo eṇa p
 peyarvōḷ kaiyatai ... atu nī pāl **vallāy āyiṇai**

(pati.52:22-24, 25-26)

[**vallāy** ‘you who are capable’; **āyiṇai** ‘you became;
 you have become’]

‘Although you beg for it, the little red water-lily is in her (your queen’s) hand, who without agreeing (to give it to you) moves away saying “Who are you to me?.” **You have become unable to share (that flower).**’

naṭukal āyinaṇ puravalaṇ (*puṛa.221:13*)
 [naṭukal ‘hero stone’; āyinaṇ ‘he became’]
 ‘The protector (of the suppliants) **has become a hero-stone.**’

malar āṛ malir niṛai vantaṇa p puṇal āṭu puṇar **tuṇai āyiṇaḷ** emakkē
(*aiṅk.72:4-5*)

[tuṇai ‘companion’; āyiṇaḷ ‘she became’]
 ‘Since the flood arrived filled with flowers, **she** (my lover) **became a companion** uniting with me bathing in the water.’

āay aṇṭiraṇ ... mēlōṛ ulakam eytiṇaṇ eṇāa ... puravalar k kāṇātu ...
 pulavar ... piṛar nāṭu paṭu **celaviṇar āyiṇar** iṇiyē
(*puṛa.240:3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14*)

[celaviṇar ‘those who are on a journey’; āyiṇar ‘they became’]
 ‘Since Āy Aṇṭiraṇ reached the world of the Nobles / great people, now the poets have become those **who undertake a journey** to the countries of others without being able to find protectors (here).’

perum **kuḷam āyiṛru** eṇ iṭai mulai niṛaintē (*kuṛu.325:6*)
 [kuḷam ‘pond’; āyiṛru ‘it became’]
 ‘The middle of my breasts was filled (with my tears) and a big **pond emerged.**’

aṇṇaiyum aṛintaṇaḷ **alarum āyinru** (*aiṅk.236:1*)
 [alar ‘gossip’; āyinru ‘it became; it came to be’]

‘Mother has come to know (about her love). **Gossip also came into being.**’

perum kal atar itai p pirinta kālai t tava naṇi **neṭiya āyina** iniyē
aṇiyilai ulli yām varutaliṇ **naṇiya āyina** curattiṭai ārē

(*aink.359:2-5*)

[**neṭiya** ‘those which are long’; **naṇiya** ‘those which are close’;
āyina ‘they became’]

‘(With a desire for wealth) when I departed/left through the small path (full) of big stones, the paths/ways through the forest **were** very much **longer**. Now, since I am coming (back), thinking about the (woman with) beautiful ornaments, **they have become closer.**’

yāṇum niṇ cēriyēṇē ayalilāṭṭiyēṇ **nuṅkai ākuven** niṇakku

(*aka.386:10-12*)

[**nuṅkai** ‘your younger sister’; **ākuven** ‘I am’]

‘I too belong to your neighborhood. I live next door. **I am a younger sister to you.**’

vayalaiyum ... nocciyum ... taṇṭalaiyum teṇuvara **nōy ākinrēm** ...
niṇ tōli ... viṭalaiyai ... malai ār itai naliyum kol eṇavē

(*narṛ.305:1, 2, 4-5, 9, 10*)

[**nōy** ‘sickness, ailment’; **ākinrēm** ‘we are becoming ...’]

‘While the vayalai creeper and the nocci tree (which our daughter played with), and the grove (where she met her lover alone) are tormenting (us), **we are falling sick** worrying whether (she) your friend makes the Viṭalai (her lover) sad (as they go) through the difficult mountainous path.’

uḷ ilōrkku **vali ākuvan** kēḷ ilōrkku k **kēḷ ākuvan** (*pura.396:10-11*)

[**vali** ‘strength’; **kēḷ** ‘kin’; **ākuvan** ‘he will be; he will become’]

‘He will become strength to those who do not have the inside/enthusiasm. **He will become a kin** for those who do not have kin.’

kauvai ākinratu aiya niṇ aruḷē (narr.227:9)

[**kauvai** ‘gossip’; **ākinratu** ‘it is becoming ...’]

‘Lord, your compassion **is becoming a** (matter of) **gossip.**’

ēṇal kāvaliṇ iṭai uṟṟu oruvaṇ ... taṇ eṇa c ciṟu puṟam kavaiyiṇaṇ āka
ataṟkoṇṭu aḥṭē niṇainta neṇcamoṭu **iḥtu ākinru** yāṇ uṟṟa nōyē

(narr.128:7, 8-11)

[**iḥtu** ‘this one’; **ākinru** ‘it is becoming ...’]

‘When we were watching the millet field, one person interfered and pleasantly/gently hugged my small back. Since then, with a heart thinking only about it, the (love)sickness I got **has turned into this.**’

micaṭ p peyta nīṟ kaṭal parantu **muttu ākuntu** (puṟa.380:6)

[**muttu** ‘pearl’; **ākuntu** ‘it is becoming ...’]

‘The (rain) water which poured from above spreads on the sea and **turns into pearls.**’

yāṇ ākuval niṇ nalam taruvēṇē (aka.392:28)

[**yāṇ** ‘I’; **ākuval** ‘I am, I will be’]

‘**I will be the one** who brings (back) your loveliness.’

peṭai puṇar aṇṟil iyaṅku kural aḷaii k kaṅkulum kaiyaṟavu tantaṇṟu

yāṅku ākuven kol aḷiyen yāṇē (narr.152:7-9)

[**yāṅku** ‘how’; **ākuven** ‘I will be’]

‘Mixing with the noise made by the movement of the aṇṟil bird uniting with its female, the night also has brought cessation of action (upon me). **How/What will I be?** I am to be pitied.’

(Note that **kaiyaṟavu** is translated as ‘cessation of action.’)

mālaiyum uḷḷār āyiṇ kālai **yāṅku ākuvam** kol pāṇa (aka.14:12-13)

[**yāṅku** 'how'; **ākuvam** 'we will be']

'Bard, if he would not think of us even in the evening, **how/what will we be** in the morning?'

celvai āyiṇ **celvai ākuvai** (pura.70:16)

[**celvai** 'wealthy one (2nd person)'; **ākuvai** 'you will become']

'If you go (to him) **you will become a wealthy person.**'

(Note the pun on **celvai**.)

pati vayiṇ tīrnta num pulampu cēṇ akala p **putuvir ākuvir**

(malai:411-412)

[**putuvir** 'new persons (2nd person)'; **ākuvir** 'you will become']

'As the loneliness of having left your hometown leaves you, **you will become new persons.**'

ceviyiṇ kēṭpiṇum col irantu vekuḷvōḷ kaṇṇiṇ kāṇiṇ **eṇ ākuvaḷ** kol ...

palar paṭintu uṇṇum niṇ parattai mārpē (aink.84:1-2, 5)

[**eṇ** 'what?'; **ākuvaḷ** 'she will become']

'She would be furious beyond words if she even heard (about it).

What will she become if she looks with her own eyes at your prostituting chest which is enjoyed by many (women).

eṇrum cāṇrōr cāṇrōr pālar āpa cālār cālār pālar ākupavē

(pura.218:5-8)

[**cāṇrōr** 'noble people'; **pālar** 'those who belong';

āpa 'they are, they will become'; **cālār** 'those who are not noble'; **ākupa** 'they will become']

'Those who are noble **will** always **belong** among the nobles. Those who are not noble **will** **belong** among those who are not noble.'

puḷ iṇam aṇaiyar ... iravalar avarai p puravu etirkollum peruñ cey
 āṭavar uṭaimai ākum avar uṭaimai avar iṇmai ākum avar
 iṇmaiye (pura.199:3-4, 5-7)

[āṭavar ‘men’; uṭaimai ‘possession, property’;
 ākum ‘it is, it will be’; avar ‘they’; here, it means ‘their’;
 iṇmai ‘non-possession, poverty’]

‘Poets are like birds. **The property of men who face the responsibility of protecting them and do great things is their possession. Their poverty is their (i.e., the poets’) poverty.**’

muḷi ciṇai piḷakkum munpu iṇmaiye yānai kai maṭittu uyavum
 kāṇamum iṇiya ām nummoṭu variṇē (kuru.388:5-7)

[iṇiya ‘pleasant (neuter plural)’; ām ‘it will be, it will become’]

‘If I come along with you, even the forests, where the elephants suffer folding their trunks because of not having the strength even to break dry tree branches, **will be pleasant.**’

tāṇkal ākā āṅku niṇ kaḷiṇē (pati.53:21)

[tāṇkal ‘control’; ākā ‘they will not be’]

‘Your elephants **will not be in control** there.’

(verbal noun + verbal noun of ā)

kātalar varuvar eṇpatu vāyvatu ākal ... kāṇiya vammō
 (aka.323:2-3, 7)

[vāyvatu ‘happening, reality’; ākal ‘coming into being’]

‘Come to see **the realization** of our belief **that** (your) lover **will come.**’

im maṛai **alar ākāmai**yō aritē (aka.98:24-25)
 [alar ‘rumour, gossip’; ākāmai ‘not coming into being’]
 ‘It is unlikely that this secret (love) will **not become a** (matter of) **gossip.**’

(personal verb + causal of ā)

ceypa ellām **ceytanān ākalin** ituka onrō cutuka onrō (pura.239:19-20)
 [ceytanān ‘he did’; ākalin ‘since, therefore’]
 ‘**Since he did** all that was/had to be done, bury him or cremate him.’

neṭumāvaḷavaṇ tēvar ulakam **eytinān ātalin** aṇṇōṇ kavikkum kaṇ
 akaṇ tāli vaṇaital vēṭṭanai āyiṇ eṇaiyatūum iru nilam tikiriyā p
 peru malai maṇṇā vaṇaital ollumō niṇakkē (pura.228:10-15)
 [**eytinān** ‘he reached’; **ākalin** ‘since, therefore’]
 ‘Neṭumāvaḷavaṇ **reached** the world of the gods. **Therefore**, if you want to make a pot for burying him with a wide orifice, would it be possible somehow to make it with the vast earth as the wheel and the large mountain as the clay?’

(personal verb + concessive of fact of ā)

ūraṇ peṇṭu taṇ koḷunaṇai nammoṭu pulakkum eṇpa nām atu **ceyyām**
āyinum uyyāmaiṇ ... ciṛitu avaṇ ulamantu varukam ceṇmō tōli (aka.106:5-7, 8-9)
 [**ceyyām** ‘we do not do, we did not do’; **āyinum** ‘although’]

‘They say that the Ūraṇ’s woman is sulking, associating me with her husband. **Although we did not do** (anything to confirm) that, let us walk around there (in their neighborhood) a little and come back since there is no escape (from her accusation).’

arum curam tuṇintu **piraḷ āyiṇaḷ āyiṇum** ... taṇ mārpū tuṇai āka t
tuyiṇṇuka (aka.35:10-11, 12-13)

[**piraḷ** ‘different woman, another woman’; **āyiṇaḷ** ‘she became’;
āyiṇum ‘although’]

‘**Although she** (my daughter) **has become a stranger** (by eloping with her lover), may he (the lover) make her sleep with his chest as support.’

(personal verb + concessive of supposition of ā)

īyāy **āyiṇum** iraṇkuvēṇ allēṇ (puṛa.209:13)

[īyāy ‘you will not give’; **āyiṇum** ‘even if’]

‘**Even if you do not give** (me anything) I will not feel sorry (for asking you).’

tuṛaivaṇ **kuṛiyāṇ āyiṇum kuṛippinūm** piṇṇiṇṇu oṇṇu aṇiyārkkū uraiṇṇalō
yāṇē (kuru.318:3-5)

[**kuṛiyāṇ** ‘he will not intend’; **āyiṇum** ‘even if’; **kuṛippinūm** ‘even if he intends’]

‘**Whether** he does **not intend or intends** (to marry me) should I tell/suggest it to the Tuṛaivaṇ who does not (seem to) know anything else?’

(Note that **kuṛiyāṇ āyiṇum kuṛippinūm** is a “whether ... or not ...” type of construction.)

(personal verb + conditional of ā)

cellātīm eṇa c **collinam āyin** celvar kollō (kuru.350:2-3)

[**collinam** 'we told'; **āyin** 'if']

'Will he go **if we tell** him "Please do not go"?'

tumpi ... aṇṇal neṭu varai c **cēri āyin** ... tiṇai ... kaḷaiṇar taṅkai
tamarin tīrāl eṇmō (kuru.392:1, 3, 4, 5-6)

[**cēri** 'you will reach'; **āyin** 'if']

'O honeybee, **if you reach** the tall elevated mountain (of his country), please tell (him) that the younger sister of the people who remove the weeds in the millet field will not vanish / go away from her kin.'

muṇ niṇru **kaṇṭanir āyin** kaḷaṇalir ... mataiyya nōkkē
(aka.130:1-2, 14)

[**kaṇṭanir** 'you saw, you have seen'; **āyin** 'if']

'Friend, you would not chide me **if you had** stood in front (of her) and **seen** her lascivious glances.'

keṭutiyum **viṭṭir āyin** emmoṭu collalum paḷiyō mel iyalīr
(kuri.144-145)

[**viṭṭir** 'you will not let go'; **āyin** 'if']

'O women with gentle qualities, **while you do not let** my lost animals **go**, is it disgraceful even to speak with me?'

kapilan iṇru **uḷan āyin** naṇru (pura.53:12-13)

[**kapilan** personal name; **uḷan** 'he is, he exists'; **āyin** 'if']

'If (the poet) **Kapilan** was alive today, it would be good.'

inru avar **vārār āyinō nanrē** (narr.154:9-10)
 [vārār 'he will not come'; āyin 'if']
 'It would be good if he does/would not come today.'

iv ulakattu c cāṇrōr ceyta **nanru unṭu āyin** imayattu īṇṭi ... mā
 maḷai poḷinta nuṇ pal tuḷiyiṇum vāliya palavē (pura.34:19-23)
 [nanru 'good action/deed'; unṭu 'there is'; āyin 'if']
 'If there is any **good deed** done by noble people in this world, may
 you live (as a result of it) for many years, more than the drops (of
 rain) poured by the dark clouds gathered on the Himalayas.'

(personal verb + imperative/optative of ā)

īyāy āyiṇum iraṅkuvēṇ allēṇ nōy ilai ākumati peruma nammul **kuṟu**
naṇi kāṇkuvatu āka niṇ maḷiḷ irukkaiyē (pura.209:13-15, 19)
 [kuṟu naṇi 'much closeness'; kāṇkuvatu 'it will see';
 āka 'may it be']

'Even if you do not give me (anything) I will not feel sorry (for
 asking). Lord, may you be without sickness. **May** your joyful royal
 court **witness the closeness** between us.'

ayirai neṭu varai pōla t **tolaiyātu āka nī vālum nālē** (pati.70:26-27)
 [tolaiyātu 'it will not disappear, it will not perish'; āka 'may it be';
 nī vālum nāl 'the days you live']

'Like the tall Ayirai hill, **may the days you live not disappear.**'

il ākiyarō kālai mālai al ākiyar yāṇ vālu nālē (pura.232:1-2)
 [il 'to be absent'; ākiyarō 'may it be'; kālai 'morning, day';

mālai ‘evening, night’]¹¹

‘**May the days and nights cease to be.** May the days I live turn/become dark.’

(personal verb + infinitive of ā)

taṇ pukaḷ **ēttinen āka** (pura.383:5)

[**ēttinen** ‘I praised’; **āka** ‘as it is the case’]

‘**I praised** his fame and ...’

viṭuttal **toṭaṅkiṇēn āka** (pura.150:17)

[**toṭaṅkiṇēn** ‘I started’; **āka** ‘as it comes to be’]

‘**As I started** to take leave, ...’

ārri **iruntaṇem āka** (pura.381:4)

[**iruntaṇem** ‘we were, we were staying, we were sitting down’;

āka ‘as it comes to be’]

‘**As we were sitting down / stayed around,** having rested ...’

(personal verb + personal verb of ā)

yām em kātalar k kāṇēm āyiṇ ... peru nīr k kal poru ciṟu nurai pōla

mella mella **illākutumē** (kuru.290:3, 4-6)

[il ‘to be non-existent’; **ākutum** ‘we become’]

¹¹ Note that the interpretation given here for **al ākiyar yān vālu nāl** ‘May the days I live turn/become dark’ is different from the traditional interpretation ‘May the days I live not be, since they are not useful.’ See U.V. Saminathier’s commentary on this poem (1963:404). If there is no morning or evening, there will be just darkness — hence the interpretation given in this study. Also the meaning of **al** ‘darkness’ is taken into consideration.

‘If we do not see our lover, **we become nothing** very slowly, like a small dashing foam against a stone in big waters.’

pāri ... kalanta kēṇmaikku ovvāy nī eṇ **pulantānai ākuvai**

(*pura.236:3-5*)

[**pulantānai** ‘you sulked, you disliked’;

ākuvai ‘you have become, you will become’]

‘O Pāri, **you have come to dislike** me without agreeing to our united friendship.’

kēḷār ākuvar tōḷi

(*kuṟu.253:1*)

[**kēḷār** ‘he will not listen’; **ākuvar** ‘he is, he will be’]

‘**He does not hear** (about your grief), my friend.’

perum kaṭal **uṇṇār ākupa** nīr vēṭṭōrē

(*pura.204:5-6*)

[**uṇṇār** ‘they will not eat/drink’; **ākupa** ‘they are, they will be’]

‘**Those** who wished for water **will not drink** the big ocean.’

iv aḷuṅkal mūtūr viḷavu iṇṇu āyiṇum **tuṇcātu ākum**

(*aka.122:1-2*)

[**tuṇcātu** ‘it will not sleep’; **ākum** ‘it is, it will be’]

‘This noisy ancient town **will/does not rest** even if there is no festival.’

puli pārttu orṛiya kaḷirru irai pīlaippiṇ eli pārttu **orrātu ākum**

(*pura.237:16-17*)

[**orrātu** ‘it will not attack’; **ākum** ‘it is, it will be’]

‘If/Because the tiger misses its prey of a male elephant which it viewed/considered (carefully) and attacked, **it will not** look for a mouse and **attack**.’

inroṭu cinnāḷ varinūm ... **paṭāa ākum** em kaṇṇē (aka.391:9-10)
 [paṭāa 'they will not rest'; ākum 'they are, they will be']
 'Even if he comes (for a rendezvous) for a few days including
 today, our (hon.) **eyes will not rest/sleep.**'

(personal verb + verbal noun of ā)

yān atu **paṭuttanen ākutaḷ** nāṇi (aka.66:18-19)
 [paṭuttanen 'I made it happen'; ākutaḷ 'being, becoming']
 'feeling embarrassed about **my making it happen**'

avar kāṇ nām ilam ākutaḷ aṇitum (narr.299:5-6)
 [nām 'we'; ilam 'we are not, we do not exist';
 ākutaḷ 'being, becoming']
 'We understand that **we**, whom he might (come to) see, **are becoming non-entities.**'

aruḷāy ākalō koṭitē (narr.195:1)
 [aruḷāy 'you will not show compassion'; ākal 'becoming']
 'It is cruel that **you are not being compassionate.**'

veṇi eṇa uṇamta **vēlan** nōy maruntu **aṇiyān ākutaḷ** aṇṇai kāṇiya (kuru.360:1-2)
 [aṇiyān 'he will not know'; ākutaḷ 'being, becoming']
 'May mother see that the **Vēlan** (priest of the deity Murukan) who
 considered the frenzy (dance as a cure for my lovesickness) **does not know** the (real) cure for (my love)sickness.'

A NOTE ON THE VERB ān

GENERAL: The verb ān basically means 'to be content.' It is used in classical Tamil like any other verb, but bears a closer similarity to the verb ā 'to be' than to any other verb. Furthermore, classical Tamil negative forms of ān such as ānān 'he will not be content with doing ___ ; he will not stop doing ___ ' ; ānāl 'she will not be content with doing ___ ; she will not stop doing ___ ', etc. are identical in form with some affirmative personal verb forms of ā in modern Tamil (cf. ānān 'he became ___ ; he started to ___ ', ānāl 'she became ___ ; he started to ___ ', etc.) . Derivationally, however, the forms of ān and the forms of ā are different and do not bear any semantic connection. Therefore, a note on ān is necessary in this study.

FORMATION: In classical Tamil, the verb ān is attested in its past/completive forms or negative forms. In a past/completive form, which always expresses a positive sense, the past/completive marker t is suffixed to ān and other suffixes follow. In a negative adjectival participle form, ā is suffixed to ān to produce ānā which can be understood as 'unending, relentless, discontented' as the opposite of the positive form ānru 'being

fulfilled, contented, contained; having reached a stage of calmness.' In all other attested negative forms of āṇ, a PNG suffix beginning with a long vowel is added directly to āṇ.

EXAMPLES

A) The following are the classical Tamil forms of āṇ which are not confused with any forms of ā. For each derived form of āṇ, the corresponding classical form derived from ā is also provided:

Forms of āṇ 'to be content'

āṇru advp.

'being fulfilled/contented/calm'
(*puṛa.191:6*)

āṇra adjp.

'fulfilled/contented; calm'
(*puṛa.26:12*)

āṇral verbal noun

'fulfillment, contentment'
(*aka.168:3*)

Forms of ā 'to be, to become'

āki

'having become ...'
(*aiṅk.359:1*)

āyina

'that which became ...'
(*pati.19:18*)

ākiya

'... who became ...'
(*kuṛu.252:2*)

ākal

'coming into being' (*aka.323:3*)

ākutal 'being, becoming'

(*aka.66:19*)

ātal 'being; thriving'

(*puṛa.91:10*)

ānranru 3rd person personal verb
 ‘it is contented/calm’ (*aka.350:5*)

ānranai 2nd person sing. personal verb;
 participial noun
 ‘you are contented; be calm’
 (*aka.325:14*)

ānrikam 1st person plural personal verb;
 imperative/optative
 ‘let us be contented/calm’ (*aka.74:12*)

ānricin imperative/optative
 ‘be contented/calm’ (*kuri:34*)

ānatu ‘it became ...’
 (*kali.147:3*)

āyinru ‘it became ...’
 (*aink.236:1*)

āyirru ‘it became ...’
 (*kuru.325:6*)

ākinru ‘it is becoming ...’
 (*narr.25:12*)

ākinratu ‘it is becoming ...’
 (*aka.96:18*)

āyina
 ‘you have become ...’
 (*pati.52:26*)

āyina (*narr.159:9*)
āyinem (*aka.262:13*)
āyinēm (*pura.141:9*)
 ‘we became ...’

ākuvai
 ‘you will become ...’
 (*pura.236:5*)

āka
 ‘May ... become ...’
 (*pura.209:19*)

ākuka
 ‘May ... become ...’
 (*aka.203:18*)

	ākarka 'May it not become ...' (<i>aink.4:6</i>)
ānā negative adjectival participle '... which is not contented' (<i>matu.211-214</i>)	ākā 'which will not be ...' (<i>narr.109:5</i>)
ānā 3rd person neuter plural 'they are not contented' (<i>pati.47:8</i>)	ākā 'they will not ...' (<i>pati.53:21</i>)
ānātu negative adverbial participle 'without being contented/calm' (<i>aka.3:10</i>)	ākātu 'without being ...' (<i>kuru.27:3</i>)
ānāy 2nd person singular personal verb; participial noun 'you (who) are not contented/satisfied' (<i>aka.375:2; narr.193:3</i>)	āyinaī 'you have become ...' (<i>pari.52:26</i>)
ānravar 3rd person pl. participial noun 'X who are contented' (<i>pari.19:3</i>)	(not attested)
ānrōr 3rd person pl/hon. participial noun 'X who is/are contented' (<i>narr.233:8</i>)	(not attested)
ānrōl 3rd person feminine participial noun 'she who is contented' (<i>pati.55:1</i>)	(not attested)

B) The following are the classical Tamil negative forms of **āṇ** which are likely to be confused with identical positive forms of **ā** in modern Tamil:

āṇīr: (2nd person honorific)

āmpal kuṟunar nīr vēṭṭāṅku iṇaḷ iṭai mulai k kiṭantum **naṭuṅkal āṇīr**
(*kuṟu.178:3-4*)

[**naṭuṅkal** ‘trembling, shaking, shivering’

< **naṭuṅku** ‘to tremble, shake, shiver’

āṇīr ‘you will not cease to ... ; you will not stop ... ’

< **āṇ** ‘to be content’ + **īr** PNG]

‘Although you are lying between her breasts, **you do not stop shivering** (out of thirst of passion) just as those who pick water-lilies wish for (drinking) water.’

‘Although you are lying between her breasts, you shudder relentlessly just like those who pick water-lilies are thirsty for drinking water.’

āṇāḷ: (3rd person feminine)

palavum **viṇaval āṇāḷ āki** ... allal uḷappōḷ (*pura.160:24-25, 26*)

[**pala** ‘many things’; **viṇaval** (verbal noun) ‘enquiry, asking’

< **viṇa** ‘to enquire’

āṇāḷ ‘she will not stop’ < **āṇ** ‘to be content’ + **āḷ** PNG;

āki advp of **āku** ‘to become’]

‘she (my wife) who is distressed, **having become someone who is not contented with asking** (our child to do) **many things** (in order to distract him from being hungry)’

‘she (my wife) who is distressed, asking relentlessly (our child to do) many things (in order to distract him from being hungry)’
 (Note that this example clearly shows that āṇāḷ and āki cannot be derived from the same root.)

āṇār: (3rd person human plural)

āṇān: (3rd person masculine)

aṭṭu āṇānē kuṭṭuvaṇ aṭu toruṁ perṛu āṇārē paricilar kaḷirē ... tol
 nakar varaippin avaṇ urai āṇāvē (pati.47:1-2, 8)

[aṭṭu advp of aṭu ‘to kill, conquer’;

perṛu advp of peru ‘to obtain’; urai ‘words’

āṇān ‘he will not stop’ < āṇ ‘to be content’ + āṇ PNG;

āṇār ‘they will not stop’ < āṇ ‘to be content’ + ār PNG]

‘(The king) Kuṭṭuvaṇ **did not stop killing** (his enemies). The suppli-
 ants **did not stop receiving** male elephants (as gifts from him).
 Words of (his) praise **did not stop** (being spoken) in the region of his
 ancient city.’

C) The following classical Tamil past/completive forms of ā ‘to be’ provide
 the clue that the n in them is the contracted form of in:

āṇatu: (3rd person neuter singular personal verb)

naṇavu uṇṭār mayakkam pōl kāmam vēru oru pārru āṇatu kollō
 cīraṭi c cilampu ārppa iyaliyāl iṇaḷ maṇṇō iṇi maṇṇum pulampūra
 p pullenra vaṇappiṇāl ... (kali.147:2-5)

[vēru ‘different’; oru ‘one’;

pārru adjectival noun < pāl ‘section, side’;

vēru oru pārru ‘that which is on a different side’

āṇatu < *āyīnatu ‘it became’ < āy advp of ā + in + atu PNG;

vēru oru pārru ānatu ‘it has become something that belongs to a different side’]

‘**Has** (her lover’s) **passion turned to a different side** like the delusion of those who drank toddy? Alas, she used to go around (happily with) her anklets sounding on her small feet. Now, as loneliness surrounds her and her lustrous beauty gone, ...’

ānāl: (conditional “if”)

āyar **emar ānāl** āyttiyeṁ yām (kali.108:9)

[ā ‘to be’; **ānāl** < *āyīnāl < āy + īn + āl]

‘**If our kin are** cowherds, we are cowherdesses.’

ānum: (concessive of fact “although”)

niṇ **tavaru illānum** kaḷaiñar il nōy ceyyum kaṇiṇ aṇintu aṇintu tam
vaḷamaiyāl pōttanta numar tavaru il eṇpāy (kali.58:8-10)

[niṇ **tavaru** ‘your fault’; **illānum** < il ‘to be non-existent’ + ***ānum**
***ānum** < *āyīnum ‘although’ < āy + īn + um]¹

‘**Although it is not your fault**, do you (mean to) say that it is not/neither the fault of your kin, who know that your fascinating beauty would give incurable (love)sickness (to the onlookers) and still let you go dressed up (like this) because of their (pride of) wealth?’

¹ Cf. Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar’s commentary on *kali.58:16*, where he says that **āyīnum** is reduced as **ānum**.

ānum: (concessive of supposition “even if”)

ennānum pātu enīn pātavum vallēn (kali.140:13)

[**ennānum** ‘whatever it is’ < **en** ‘what’ + ***ānum**

ānum < ***āyinum** ‘even if’ < **āy** + **in** + **um**]

‘Whatever it is, if you tell me “Sing,” I am even capable of singing.’

A similar reduction process (**in** > **n**) is observed in the form **mēyina** which becomes **mēna**: puravē olīlīlai makalīroṭu maḷḷar **mēna** ‘The small forests were occupied by your warriors and women with bright ornaments’ (pati.13:20-21). Here, **mēna** is derived from ***mēyina** ‘were occupied’ < **mēy** (advp of **mē** ‘to fill, spread, occupy’) + **in** + a PNG.

A Result of the Reduction (**in** > **n**)

In due course, the reduction from **in** to **n** led to the derivation of forms such as **āna**, **ānavar** ‘one who is ...’, **ānālum** ‘although’, etc. in later Tamil. They are, in fact, contracted forms of **āyina**, ***āyīnavar**, ***āyīnālum**, etc. Except **āyina** (pati.19:18), these forms are not attested in classical Tamil.

Furthermore, this contraction led some later forms which are positive to bear a similarity to classical Tamil negative forms. For example, the positive form **ānēn** ‘I became ...’, which is used in a later text, *maṇi*.21:22, is similar to the classical Tamil negative form **ānān**. Unlike the classical form, it is a contracted form and is derived from **ā** (**āy** advp. of **ā** ‘to be’ + **in** + **ēn** PNG). Note that the non-contracted form **āyīnēn** ‘I became ...’ is also used in the same later text: *ayarppatu ceyyā aṟivīnēn āyīnēn* ‘I became someone with a knowledge that does not fade’ (*maṇi*.23:93).

A Special Note on the Form “āṇa”

The earliest attestations of the form **āṇa**, occurring in post-classical texts, provide an adjectival participle sense ‘... which/who became ...’: **ēṇai aḷavaikaḷ ellām karuttiṇil āṇa muraimai** ‘the manner in which all the rest of logic has become a part of one’s intent/thinking’ (*maṇi.29:56*); **kāvalaṇē āṇa-k-kāl** ‘while he has become a protector’ (*muttolḷāyiram 92:3*). Here, **āṇa** is a contracted version of the classical form **āyina** ‘... which/who became ...’. This kind of **āṇa** is witnessed in modern Tamil expressions like **avar āciriyar āṇa pōtu** ‘when he became a teacher.’

Now, consider the other kind of **āṇa** which is added to nouns in modern Tamil to generate adjectives like **aḷakāṇa** (**aḷaku** + **āṇa**) ‘beautiful’, **mōcamāṇa** (**mōcam** + **āṇa**) ‘bad’, etc.² Note that this **āṇa** is not attested in classical Tamil and when it does occur for the first time in a later text, the meaning is ‘... which is filled with ...’. The earliest occurrence of this **āṇa** meaning ‘... which is filled with ...’ is found in one of the didactic texts from the post-classical period: **kōḷ uṇamtāl tattuvam āṇa neṛi paṭarum** ‘If one understands the precept, the path (which is) filled with reality will spread (in this world)’ (*nāṇmaṇikkaṭikai 27:2-3*). This **āṇa** seems to be a contracted version of the classical form **āṇra** ‘that which is contented’ with a related meaning ‘X which is filled with ...’.

In the final analysis, it can be said that the form “**āṇa**” which is found in post-classical and modern Tamil owes its sources to two classical Tamil forms: **āyina** (< **ā** ‘to be’) and **āṇra** (< **āṇ** ‘to be content’). And modern Tamil **āṇāl** (conditional “if it is”), **āṇālum** (concessive of fact “although it is” or concessive of supposition “even if it is”), **āṇavan**, **āṇavaḷ**, **āṇavar**, **āṇatu**, and **āṇavai** (participial nouns such as “he who is,” etc.), and **āṇēṇ**, **āṇāṇ**, **āṇār**, etc. (personal verbs such as “I became ...,”

² Cf. Arden:193.

etc.) owe their source to classical Tamil ā ‘to be.’ And, more importantly, classical Tamil negative verbs ānēn, ānān, ānār, etc. ought to be understood as different from identical modern Tamil positive forms.

SECTION 7

ADVERBS

GENERAL: Nominal and verbal forms which modify a verb in terms of distance, time, place, manner, and degree are here treated as “adverbs.”¹

FORMATION: There is more than one way to express an adverbial notion in classical Tamil.

(i) by using the bare stem;

(ii) by suffixation :

(a) **i** or **ku** is added to certain adjectival stems;

¹ “Properly speaking, the Dravidian languages have no adverbs at all. Every word that is used as an adverb in the Dravidian languages is either a noun declinable or indeclinable, or a verbal theme, or the infinitive or gerund of a verb” (Caldwell: 555-556). Andronov (page 247) says, “Adverbs, that is unchangeable words with adverbial meanings, are not numerous in Tamil. For the most part these are adverbs of place, adverbs of manner and (less frequently) adverbs of time.”

(b) **ā(ka)**, **āṅku**, **āy**, **i**, **in**, **um**, **eṇa**, and **ai** are added to other stems²

(iii) by extending the use of an infinitive, an adverbial participle, or a neuter singular adjectival noun.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: using the bare stem

ūr cēyttu eṇātu ... emmiṇum viraintu **val eyti** ... nal il ... niṇrōḷ eyti
 ... piṇṇakam tīṇṭi ... tōyntaṇru kollō ... eṇ neñcē
 (aka.9:15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 26)

[**val** ‘be capable, skilled’; **eytu** ‘to reach.’ As an adverb, **val** provides the sense ‘fastness.’ **vallai** (aīnk.425:3), which is a variant of **val**, and **ollai** (pari.6:72) < **ol** ‘be possible’ are two other similar adverbs used in classical Tamil.]

‘Rushing more than I without thinking that (her) town is far away, **reaching** there **fast**, and reaching/approaching the woman who is waiting for me in our good house, did my heart touch and immerse in her back yet?’

² Most of these stems are nominal, as will be seen below. **ā(ka)** and **eṇa** are infinitive forms of **ā** and **eṇ**. See “Case Markers and Postpositions,” “The Particles,” and “Comparison” for various uses of these suffixes. The suffix **ai** is found rarely in forms like **vallai** and **ollai**.

Formation mechanism: suffixationstem + ā(**ka**)/āñku/āy/i/in/um/eṇa/ku*Suffix Structure and Example***ā(ka):**

It is the infinitive form of ā ‘to be’ and has a variant āy. It is added to a nominal, which in most cases is an adjectival noun. Both ā(**ka**) and āy give the senses ‘in the manner of’, ‘for’, ‘with’, or ‘as.’ See also “Metonymy and Metaphor.”

(neuter singular negative adjectival noun + ā)

nī **innātā** t tuṛattaliṇ (kali.53:12)

[**innātā** ‘in a cruel manner’;

innātu ‘that which is not pleasant; cruel’ + ā ‘as, to be, in the manner of’]

‘since you are renouncing her **in a cruel manner**’

(neuter singular affirmative adjectival noun + āka)

niṇ vayiṇ cēri cērā varuvōrkku eṇrum aruḷal vēṇṭum aṇpu uṭaiyōy

eṇa k kaṇ **inītāka** k kōṭṭiyum tēralaḷ (narr.342:3-6)

[**inītāka** < **inītu** ‘that which is pleasant, sweet’ + āka]

‘She does not understand even if I **bend/slant and look at her sweetly** through the corner of my eyes saying “O affectionate one, you must be kind to those who come to your neighborhood.” ’

(verbal noun + glide + āka)

nī **nakaiyāka** t **tunī** ceytu nīṭiṇum turappu aṇci k kaluḷpavaḷ

(kali.10:14-15)

[**nakaiyāka**

< **nakai** ‘laugh’ + glide **y** + **āka** ‘to become, come into being’]

‘she whose eyes would be filled with tears, being afraid of your leaving even if you **sulk playfully** and continue to be in that state’

āṇku:

It is appended to a past/completive stem to provide an adverbial sense. When it is used as an adverb, it gives the sense ‘thus, in the manner of.’

(past stem + āṇku)

pēey ayamotu **peṭṭāṇku** vaḷaṇkum kātu

(pura.238:4-5)

[**peṭṭāṇku** < **peṭṭ** (< **peḷ** ‘to desire’) + **āṇku**]

‘forest where the demon/ghost together with its group moves around **as it wishes**’

‘forest where the demons/ghosts move around **as they wish** together with their group’

āy: This is a variant of **ā(ka)**. See above.

(adjectival noun + āy)

mēkalai kāñci vāku valayam ellām kavaram **iyalpiṛṛāy** t tenṇavan

onṇāruṭai pulam pukkaṛṛāl ... vaiyai vaṇappu (pari.7:47-50)

[**iyalpiṛṛāy** < **iyalpiṛru** adjp (< **iyalpu** ‘nature’) + **āy** ‘as, with’]

‘The beauty of (the flood in the river) Vaiyai is such that it is like the southern king entering into (his) enemies’ lands, **with the nature**

of snatching women's (waist ornaments such as) *mēkalai* and *kāñci* and men's arm bracelets.'

(verbal noun + glide + *āy*)

vīḷunarkku iṛaicciyāy viral kavarpu icaikkum kōl ēlum (*kali.8:9-10*)

[*iṛaicciyāy* < *iṛaicci* 'inner substance' + glide *y* + *āy*]

'all the seven strings which, being plucked by the (musician's) fingers, sound **profound/substantial** to those who desire it'

*i*³:

(nominal stem + *i*)

nikaḷnta vaṇṇam nī nāṇi uṇara c ceppal āṇṛiciṇ (*kuṛi.33-34*)

[*nāṇi* < *nan* (oblique of *nal* 'good') + *i*]

'I am (here) to reply/speak clearly, **so that** you **understand it well** as it happened.'

col iṇi maṭantai

(*narr.155:8*)

[*iṇi* 'now' < *iṇ* 'this moment, today' + *i*]

'**Tell me now**, young lady.'

(verbal stem + *i*)

kuppai vēḷai uppu ili ventatai maṭavōr kāṭci nāṇi (*ciru.137-138*)

[*ili* 'without' < *il* 'to be absent' + *i*]

'embarrassed about ignorant people looking at the wild greens which boiled **without salt**'

³ This might be historically related to the "past/completive marker" *i*.

in:

This is added to a neuter singular adjectival noun. It gives the sense ‘as’, and may be translated into English as “-ly.”

(neuter singular affirmative adjectival noun + **in**)

nūl aṛi pulavar **nupṇitin** kayīru iṭṭu t tēem koṇṭu ... perum peyar
maṇṇarkku oppa maṇai vakuttu (neṭu:76-77, 78)

[**nupṇitin** < **nupṇitu** ‘that which is fine, nice’ + **in**]

‘The learned people, knowledgeable in the texts, **laid down the rope nicely**, selected the directions, defined the abodes appropriate for kings with great names, and ...’

ceṇṛōrai ... **nallitin** iyakkum avaṇ curṛattu oḷukkam (malai:78, 80)
[**nallitin** < **nallitu** ‘that which is good’ + **in**]

‘the behavior/conduct of his kith and kin who would escort the visitors/guests **in a good manner**’

vālitin virinta puṇ koṭi mucuṇṭai (malai:101)

[**vālitin** < **vālitu** ‘that which is white’ + **in**]

‘the small mucuṇṭai vine, spread **in white**’

(oblique of neuter singular affirmative adjectival noun + **in**)

ariya ellām **eḷitinin** koṇṭu ... vēṇṭu pulattu iṇuttu mēmpaṭa māṇiya
vel pōr k kurucil (matu:145, 150-151)

[**eḷitinin** < **eḷitu** ‘that which is easy’ + **in** + **in**]

‘O Noble One, engaged in victorious wars, who **easily snatched / took hold** of all rare things (from different places) and camped wherever you wanted and fitted excellently.’

peruma **uritiṇiṇ** koṇṭu āṅku p peyartal vēṇṭum (aka.10:7-8)
 [uritiṇiṇ < uritu ‘that which is proper, rightful’ + iṇ + iṇ]
 ‘Lord, you must **take** (her) **by** your **right/claim** (for her) and move
 away (to your town).’

um: This is appended to a neuter singular affirmative adjectival noun.

(neuter singular affirmative adjectival noun + **um**)

pirital eṇṇiṇai āyiṇ **nanrum** aritu urṇaṇaiyāl peruma (aka.10:6-7)
 [nanrum < nanru ‘that which is good’ + **um** (emphatic particle)]
 ‘Lord, if you were to think of departing, **you have gotten** into
 something very difficult.’

peritum varuntiṇai (aka.59:2, 3)
 [peritum < peritu ‘that which is big’ + **um** (emphatic particle)]
 ‘You are **grieving very much**.’

ena: The meaning of **ena** is ‘in the manner of, thus, so to say.’ See also
 “Imitative Words.”

(nominal stem + **ena**)

kuṛuka vantu kuvavu nutal nīvi **mellena** t taḷiyyiṇēn (aka.49:6-7)
 [mellena < mel ‘soft, gentle’ + **ena**]
 ‘Coming close (to her) and caressing (her) curved forehead, **I**
hugged her gently.’

(mutated stem + **ena**)

naṇi pacantaṇaḷ **ena** viṇavuti ataṇ tiṛam yāṇum **terrena** uṇarēṇ
 (aka.48:3-4)
 [terrena < terr (mutated stem) + **ena** < *teḷ ‘to be clear’ + **ena**]

‘You are enquiring me why she has turned very pale. I also do not understand the reason **clearly**.’

(It is also possible to interpret **atan tiram** to mean ‘its power.’)

ku: The only adjectival stem that takes this suffix to provide an adverbial sense is **nal** ‘good.’⁴

(adjectival stem + **ku**)

viḷu p paṇṭam nāṭu āra **naṅku ilitarum** āṭu iyal peru nāvāy
(*matu:81-83*)

[**naṅku** < **naṅ** oblique of **nal** ‘good’ + **ku**]

‘the big swaying ship which is **sailing down nicely** for the country to be filled with the excellent things / supreme cargo’

Formation mechanism: extension

using adverbial participles, infinitives, or
neuter singular adjectival nouns

Structure and Example

Adverbial Participles

ōṅki t tōṅrum uyar varai (aka.42:13-14)
[**ōṅku** ‘to be lofty’; **tōṅru** ‘to appear’]
‘the high mountain which **appears lofty**’

⁴ Quite conceivably, direction words such as **kuṇakku** ‘east’, **kuṭakku** ‘west’, **vaṭakku** ‘north’, and **terku** ‘south’ can be said to contain this suffix.

puḷ **imilntu olikkum** icai (matu:111)
 [imil ‘to emit a low continuous sound, hum’; oli ‘to sound’]
 ‘the music of birds **humming**’

Infinitives

kuṛuka vantu kuvavu nutal nīvi melleṇa t taḷīyiṇēṇ (aka.49:6-7)
 [kuṛuku ‘to get close’; vantu advp < var ‘to come’]
 ‘**Coming close** (to her) and caressing (her) curved forehead, I
 hugged her gently.’

notumalāḷaṇ neṇcu **ara p perra** eṇ ciṛumutukkuṛaivi (aka.17:8-9)
 [aru ‘to be completely cut off from its source’]⁵
 ‘my long-awaited little girl who **won over** a stranger’s heart **com-**
pletely’

nāṇiṇa(l) varuvōḷ vēṇṭāmaiṇ **men mela vantu** ... ākam aṭaitantōḷē
 (narr.308:3-4, 8)
 [mel ‘soft, gentle, slow’]⁶
 ‘She, who came bashfully, **came very slowly** and rested on my
 chest because she did not like my departure.’

⁵ Compare modern Tamil **aravē** (ara + glide v + ē) ‘completely.’ The word **ciṛumutukkuṛaivi** is normally interpreted to mean ‘a young woman who has ancient/old wisdom.’ Here it is interpreted differently to mean ‘long-awaited little girl’: **ciṛu** ‘small, little’; **mutu** ‘old, ancient’; **kuṛaivi** (adjectival noun) < **kuṛai** ‘what is needed, required’ + **vi** (adjectival noun suffix).

⁶ The duplication **men mela** is for emphasis and/or to denote the repetition of the action. See “Doublets and Stacks” in “Notes on Miscellaneous Items” for a discussion of similar items.

uḷ il eṇṛūḷ viyaṇ kuḷam **niṛaiya** vīci p perum peyal **poḷinta** ... vaikaṛai
(aka.42:8-10)

[**niṛai** ‘to be full, fill up’]

‘daybreak (before) when big clouds **poured** heavily **filling** the wide empty tanks which were drying up in the scorching sun’

puraiya p **pūṇṭa** kōtai mārpinaḷ (aka.100:2)

[**purai** ‘to be high, stack up’]

‘You have a chest with garlands which you have **worn high** (as a pile).’

vaṭa pāl cempon malaiyiṇ **ciṛappa** t tōṇrum ... taḷarā irukkai
(peru:240-241, 242)

[**ciṛa** ‘to excel, surpass’]

‘unswerving residences which look **excellent** like the golden mountain (Mēru) in the north’

viṇai naṇṛu ātal **veruppa** k **kāṭṭi** (aka.33:1)

[**veru** ‘to be overwhelmed’]

‘**showing decisively** that the act (of gathering wealth) will turn out to be good’

Neuter Singular Adjectival Nouns

neyyōṭu aiyavi appi **aitu uraittu** (tiru:228)

[**aitu** < **ai** ‘soft, thin’]

‘smearing aiyavi (poppy seeds) with ghee and **chanting softly**’

avaṇ cāru ayar mūtūr cēyttum aṇṇu **cir̥itu naṇiyatuvē** (*ciru:201-202*)

[**cir̥itu** < **cir̥u** ‘little, small’]

‘His ancient town celebrating festivities is not very far either. It is a **little close.**’

oru kai paḷḷi or̥ri oru kai muṭiyōṭu kaṭakam cērtti **neṭitu niṇaintu**

(*mull:75-76*)

[**neṭitu** < **neṭu** ‘long, deep’; **niṇai** ‘to think’]

‘touching the bed with one arm, joining the bracelet on the other arm to the crown, and **thinking intensely** ‘

COMPARISON

GENERAL: Actions, qualities, and results are the entities which enter into comparison. There seem to be three different ways of expressing what is normally understood by “degrees of comparison.” For example, if one wants to compare two things, A and B, one way is to say that “A is like B” or “A does __ like B.” Another way is to say, “compared to B, A is __ .” Yet another way is to place A in a group and say that “Among many __ , A is __ .” For the purposes of this study, the first of these options is called “plain/basic comparison,” whereas the second and the last are referred to as the “comparative degree” and the “superlative degree” of comparison respectively.

FORMATION:

- (a) Plain/Basic comparison is expressed by suffixation and periphrasis:

- (i) by suffixing **il/in** to the nominative or the oblique form of a noun and following it with a verb form or an appellative noun when an action is compared;
 - (ii) by placing B in apposition with A when a quality or an action is compared;
 - (iii) by placing certain verb stems or participles between the two things, A and B, and following them with a verb form or an adjectival noun when actions or qualities are compared.¹
- (b) The comparative degree of comparison is expressed by suffixation and periphrasis:
- (i) by adding **inum** or **ku** to a nominative or the oblique form of a noun and following it with a verb form;
 - (ii) when a quality is compared, the adjective expressing the quality is nominalized and the nominalized form follows the suffix **in** or **ku**.
- (c) The superlative degree of comparison is expressed by suffixation: **uḷḷum** is added to the plural form of a noun.

No person-number-gender distinction, nor a distinction between affirmation and negation is made by the affixes **il**, **in**, **inum**, **uḷḷum**, and **ku**.

¹ These participles (e.g., **pōla** 'resembling') are usually taken as given lexical items or are treated as "particles." Note that only a few examples of verb stems which are placed between A and B for comparison are given below. Some other verbs which are used for comparison are **uraḷ**, **kaṭu**, and **ēy** as in **uraḷa**, **kaṭuppa**, and **ēyppa**.

EXAMPLES

Plain/Basic comparison

(A and B are in apposition)

tuvar vāy (poru:27)
 [tuvar ‘coral’; vāy ‘mouth’]
 ‘coral (like) lips’

Verb Form/Suffix

Structure and Example

anna:

anna is basically a participle (< *an ‘to be of that nature’). It is followed by a nominal and so can be thought of as an adjectival participle. However, it is considered as a particle of comparison in the tradition.

(nominative stem + **anna** + nominal)

nīr p paṭu paruntin irum **ciraku anna** nilam tin **citāar** (pati.12:19-20)
 [ciraku ‘wings’; citāar ‘rag’]
 ‘piece of rag, eaten by mud, which is like the big wings of a vulture suffering in (the rain) water’

nī vāltal īyā vaḷaṇ aṛu **paitiram anna āyiṇa paḷaṇam** tōrum ...
 tāmarai āmpaloṭu malarntu (pati.19:17-20)
 [paitiram ‘green fields’; paḷaṇam ‘(cultivated) fields’]
 ‘as lotuses bloomed together with water-lilies in every field which turned out to be like the green fields (of your enemies) on which you did not bestow (good) living’

(oblique stem + **anna** + nominal)

maṇi k **kalattanna** mā itaḷ **neytal** (pati.30:2)

[**kalam** 'vessel, pot'; **neytal** 'blue water-lily']

'blue water-lilies which are like a vessel of blue gems'

arakkattanna nuṇ **maṇal kōṭu** (pati.30:27)

[**araku** 'sealing wax'; **maṇal kōṭu** 'sand heap']

'fine sand heaps which are (red) like lacquer'

muttin anna veḷ vī (aka.335:20)

[**muttu** 'pearl(s)']

'white flowers which are like pearls'

(oblique stem + case marker + **anna** + nominal)

kāciṇai anna ... **kaṇi** (kuṟu.274:2)

[**kācu** 'coin'; **kaṇi** 'fruit(s)'; **kāciṇ** oblique stem]

'fruits which are like coins'

(past/completive stem + **anna** + nominal)

kōṭu vārantanna veṇ pū t tālai (narr.203:4)

[**vār** 'to slice, comb'; **veṇ pū** 'white flower'; **kōṭu** 'tusks, conch']

'screwpines with white flowers which look like sliced tusks/conches'

anaiya: It is a variant of **anna**.

(nominal + **anaiya** + nominal)

aruntati anaiya **karpiṇ** ... **tāy** (aink.442:4-5)

'mother who has profundity/chastity like Aruntati'

āṅku: It basically means ‘thus, in that manner.’ See also “Adverbs.”

(past/completive stem + **āṅku** + verb)

arimāṇ vaḷaṅkum cāral piṛa māṇ ... iṇa nirai **neṅcu atirntāṅku** ...
neṭu nakar aracu tuyil iṇyātu **mātiram paṇikkum** maṛam vīṅku
pal pukal (pati.12:5-8)

[**neṅcu** ‘heart’; **atir** ‘to tremble, shudder’; **mātiram** ‘directions’;
paṇi ‘to shake’]

‘your fame, enhanced by your valor which **makes the directions tremble** without providing sleep to the (enemy) kings in their big palaces, just as on a mountain slope, where the king of animals / the lion moves around, **the hearts** of other animal groups **quake**’

vicumpu āṭu aṇṇam **parai nivantāṅku** p polam paṭai p polinta **veṇ**
tēr ēri ... cenṇaṇaṇē (kuru.205:2-3, 5)

[**parai** ‘flying’; **niva** ‘to soar’; **veṇ tēr** ‘white chariot’;
ēru ‘to climb on’]

‘**Like the swans, playing in the sky, soared in their flight, he climbed onto the white chariot** decorated with gold and left.’

il:

(nominative stem + **il** + verb)

murūṅkai vāṇ pū ... **uṭai tirai** p **pitirvil poṅki** muṇ kaṭal pōl tōṇṇala
kāṭu (aka.1:16, 18-19)

[**uṭai** ‘to break’; **tirai** ‘waves’; **pitirvu** ‘scattering’;
poṅku ‘to overflow’]

‘forest, where the big white flowers of the murūṅkai trees **overflow like the scattering / scattered drops of the breaking waves** and appear like the front of the ocean’



‘forests, which appear like the front of the ocean, where the big white flowers of the *murunkai* trees **overflow like the scattering/scattered drops of the breaking waves**’

in:

(nominative stem + **in** + verb)

muracam ... urumin urarupu **cilaippa** oru tām ākiya perumaiyōr
(*pura.366:1, 3-4*)

[**muracam** ‘royal drum’; **urum** ‘thunder’; **cilai** ‘to sound deep’]
‘great people who became unique (in power), (their) **royal drums** roaring **deep like thunder**’

(nominative stem + **in** + nominal)

nilam nīr vaḷi vicumpu eṇṇa **nānkin aḷappu ariyaiyē** (*pati.14:1-2*)
[**nānku** ‘four, the four things’; **aḷappu** ‘measuring’;
aru ‘to be difficult’]

‘You are **difficult to be measured as the four**, namely, the earth, the water, the wind, and the sky.’

e(n)na:

e(n)na is basically a participle (< **en** ‘to utter, make a statement’). It is followed by a verb and so can be thought of as a verbal participle. However, it is considered to be a particle of comparison in the tradition.

(nominative stem + **e(n)na** + verb)

kāṇ taku **mati eṇṇa k katir viṭu taṇmai** (*kali.100:4*)
[**mati** ‘moon’; **viṭu** ‘to release/emit’]

‘the **cool of the rays emitted like the moon** which is beautiful to look at’

‘the **cool of shining like the moon** that is pleasing to the eyes’

pon ena ... naṟu vī tāam ... punnai (aka.360:17-19)
 [pon ‘gold’; vī ‘flowers’; tā ‘to scatter, spread’]
 ‘the punnai (tree) whose fragrant flowers (with pollen) **spread like gold**’

(past/completive stem + **enna** + verb)

piṭiyotu kaḷiru **puṇarntenna** kuṟu neṭum tūmpoṭum muḷavu p **punarntu**
icaippa (aka.301:16-17)
 [puṇar ‘to join’; icai ‘to sound’]
 ‘the short pipes and the long pipes **joined** the drums **and sounded like a bull elephant joined** its female elephant’

nēr:

(nominative stem + **nēr** + nominal)

pon **nēr** pacalai (aka.172:18)
 [pon ‘gold’; **pacalai** ‘lovesick pallor’]
 ‘lovesick pallor **matching gold**’; ‘lovesick pallor **like gold**’

purai:

(nominative stem + **purai** + nominal)

vēy purai paṇai t **tōḷ** (aka.2:11)
 [vēy ‘bamboo’; **tōḷ** ‘shoulder(s)/arm(s)’]
 ‘firm rounded **shoulders/arms** which are **like bamboos**’

pōl(a):

(nominative stem + **pōl** + verb)

vimmi **aṟal pōl** ... mulai **nanaippa** ... evaṇ ninaipu vāṭuti (narr.208:1-4)
 [aṟal ‘black sand’; **nanai** ‘to wet’]
 ‘As you are sobbing and tears **wet** your breasts like **water on black sand**, what are you thinking about and wilting?’

(nominative stem + **pōla** + verb)

niṇ munṇiṇai **mutalvar pōla** niṇṇu nī ... **tavāaliyarō**

(*pati.14:19-20, 22*)

[**mutalvar** ‘the first people, chief people, ancestors’;

tapu > **tav(u)** ‘to perish’]

‘**Like the ancestors** of your clan / previous group of kin, **may you** stay, prevail, and **not perish.**’

kūval kurāl āṇ paṭu tuyar irāvil kaṇṭa uyartiṇai **ūman pōla** t tuyar
porukkallēn tōḷi nōykkē (*kurū.224:3, 5-6*)

[**ūman** ‘a mute person’; **poru** ‘to bear with, tolerate, withstand’]

‘**Like a human mute** who is witnessing at night the agony of the brown cow which has fallen into the well, I am **not able to bear with** the suffering due to this (love)sickness.’

maruḷ: Literally, it means ‘bewildered, be puzzled.’

(nominative stem + **maruḷ** + nominal)

vēy **maruḷ** paṇai t tōḷ

(*aka.1:8*)

[**vēy** ‘bamboo’; **tōḷ** ‘shoulder(s)/arm(s)’]

‘firm rounded **shoulders/arms** (which are) **like bamboos**’

‘firm rounded **shoulders/arms** which **bewilder the bamboos**’

māna:

(nominative stem + **māna** + verbal)

uri kaḷai **aravam māna** t tāṇē aritu cel ulakil **cenṇaṇaṇ**

(*pura.260:20-21*)

[**aravam** ‘snake’; **cenṇaṇaṇ** ‘he left’ < **cel** ‘to go, leave for’]

‘**Like a snake** peeling its skin, he left for the rare world (of the gods).’

Comparative Degree

Marker Structure and Example

in: See “Case Markers and Postpositions” and “Notes on Miscellaneous Items” for other uses of **in**.

(oblique stem + **in** + nominal)

itanin koṭiyatu piṛitu onru illai (*narr.322:2*)

[**itan** < **itu** ‘this one’ + **an**; **koṭiyatu** ‘that which is cruel’]

‘There is nothing else which is **more cruel than this one**.’

inum:

(oblique stem + **inum** + nominal)

ninninum maṭavaḷ ... annai (*aka.259:15-16*)

[**nin** oblique of **nī** ‘you’; **maṭavaḷ** ‘she who is ignorant’]

‘your mother, **who is more ignorant/naive than you**’

(non-oblique stem + **inum** + verb)

tūkkaṇaṅkurī nīṭu irum peṇṇai t toṭutta **kūṭinum mayaṅkiya** maiyal
ūṛ (*kuṛu.374:5-7*)

[**kūṭu** ‘nest’; **mayaṅku** ‘to be confused; tangled’; **ūṛ** ‘town’]

‘**the confused town** which is **more tangled/confused than the nest**
which the tailor-bird strung on the tall dark peṇṇai (palm) tree’

(Note that the word **kūṭu** ‘nest’ appears in its nominative form, not
in its oblique form **kūṭtu**, as in modern Tamil.)

(oblique stem + **inum** + verb)

pirinta **namminum iraṅki** arum poruḷ muṭiyātu āyiṇum varuvar

(*narr.208:9-10*)

[**nam** < **nām** ‘we’; **iraṅku** ‘to sympathize, show empathy’]

‘Feeling more sympathetic than we who are separated (from him), he will return even if the precious wealth (he is seeking) is not obtained.’

numminum t̃ān peritu **uvanta** uḷḷamōṭu ... iṇitu nōkki (*malai*:559-560)
[**num** (oblique stem) < ***nun** ‘your’ (singular); **uva** ‘to be delighted’]
‘he will look at you sweetly with a heart which is much **more delighted than you**, and ...’

ku: See “Case markers and Postpositions” and “Adverbs” for other uses of **ku**.

(nominative stem + **ku** + nominal)

vāliyōrku avaṇ **īlaiyaṇ** (*pari*.2:20-21)

[**vāli** (name of a mythological character);

īlaiyaṇ ‘one who is younger’]

‘He is younger than Vāliyōṇ (Balarāmaṇ).’

Superlative Degree

Marker Structure and Example

uḷḷum: See also “Case Markers and Postpositions.”

(plural noun + **uḷḷum** + verbal)

vicumpu vaḷaṅku **makaḷiruḷḷum ciraṇta** cemmīṇ aṇaiyaḷ
(*pati*.31:27-28)

[**makaḷir** ‘women’; **cira** ‘to excel, surpass; to be eminent’]

‘She is like the red star (Arunṭati) which is **the most excellent among the women** who move around in the sky (in the form of stars).’

IMITATIVE WORDS

GENERAL: Classical Tamil poems abound with certain words which are used basically to imitate or describe sounds, qualities, states of being, or actions. These words function like adverbs of comparison which compare two or more items on the basis of their attributes and actions. Tamil grammatical tradition does not provide a technical term for these words, which are here called “imitative words.”

USAGE: The quotative **en** ‘thus, to be in the manner of, to utter’ is suffixed to imitative words, and the “imitative stem” thus derived is used as a verb stem. Only a few examples are given below.

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanism: imitative word + **en** ____

Imitative Item *Structure and Example*

ilum: It describes certain sounds.

(**ilum** + **en**)

ilum en cummai iṭaṇ uṭai varaippu (*poru:65*)
 [**cummai** ‘noise’]
 ‘the **noise** (which sounds like) “**ilum**” ’

(**ilum** + **ena**)

cēṇ niṇṇu **ilum ena** iḷitaru **aruvi** (*tiru:315-316*)
 [**ena** < **en**; **iḷitaru** ‘to flow down’; **aruvi** ‘waterfall’]
 ‘the waterfall which flows down from a very long distance echoing
 (the sound) **ilum**’

ñerēr: It describes or imitates the suddenness of actions and sounds.

(**ñerēr** + **ena**)

imaiṭṭōr viḷitta māṭṭirai **ñerēr ena** k kuṇakku eḷu tiṅkaḷ kaṇai **iru!**
akaṇṇa (*puṇa.376:7-8*)
 [**ena** < **en**; **iru!** **akaṇṇa** ‘to remove the darkness’]
 ‘as the moon, rising in the east, **removed** the thick **darkness instantly**
 in a moment (that would normally take for) those who were closing
 their eyes to open’

ālaitoṟum ñērēr **ena** k **kaḷai** ... **uṭaikkum** karumpiṇ ēttam
(*malai:340-341*)

[**ena** < **en**; **kaḷai** ‘cane’; **uṭaikkum** adjp of **uṭai** ‘to break’]
‘the sound of **sugarcanes that are being broken fast** at every mill’

teḷ: It refers to the clarity of actions.

(**terr** + **ena**)

ataṇ tiṟam yāṇum **terrena** uṇarēṇ (*aka.48:3-4*)
[**terr** mutated stem < **teḷ** ‘to be clear’; **uṇar** ‘to realize, understand’]
‘I too did not **clearly** understand its nature.’

mel: It describes soft, slow, gentle, and subdued qualities or actions.

(**mel** + **ena**)

celva cēṟum em tol pati p peyarntu eṇa **mellena** k **kiḷantaṇam** āka
(*poru:121-122*)

[**ena** < **en**; **kiḷantaṇam** ‘we said’]
‘As **we said softly** and slowly, “Lord, we will proceed toward our ancient hometown,” ...’

pul: It describes a lifeless or lusterless quality.

(**pul** + **enra**)

curam **pullenra** āṟra (*aka.1:15*)
[**enra** < **en**; **āṟra** adjectival noun < **āru** ‘path, way’ + **a**]
‘The forests have paths which are **lifeless**.’

(pul + enrāl)

poruḷ illāṇ iḷamai pōl **pul enrāl** (kali.38:15)

[**enrāl**] 3rd person feminine personal verb < **en**]

‘**she who became lifeless** like the youth of a man without money’

pai: It describes soft and gentle actions.

(pai + ena)

paiyena k kaṭavuḷ vāḷtti [**ena** < **en**] (aka.14:15-16)

‘praising the god **softly**’

METONYMY AND METAPHOR

GENERAL: Metonymy and metaphor are figures of speech in which one thing is spoken of as if it were another. Explicit markers of comparison between entities are absent here.¹

FORMATION: Metonymy and metaphor are expressed through two mechanisms.

(i) by extension:

a) using a word that is related to the intended referent

¹ The traditional terms for metonymy are **ākupeyar** and **anmolittokai**. The term for metaphor is **uruvakam**.

ākupeyar literally means 'a name which has become (the name for another)'; **anmolittokai** 'a compound of other words' means that it is a compound the individual meanings of whose members are not the same as that of the sum total. In Tamil, **uruvakam** means 'a house for a form.' Normally, **uruvakam** is derived from Sanskrit **rūpaka**. Cf. *The Madras Tamil Lexicon*, page 449.

in terms of its source, place, time, part, attribute, or action;

b) using a nominal compound;

(ii) by periphrasis:

(a) placing two nouns in apposition which are sometimes followed by the infinitive ā(ka) with the sense ‘as (it is), as it becomes.’

EXAMPLES

Formation mechanisms: suffixation

using a related word

using a nominal compound

noun + noun ± ā(ka)

Structure and Example

A Related Word

pārvai yātta paṛai tāḷ viḷavu (peru:95)

[**pārvai** ‘viewing’ is a verbal noun < **pār** ‘to view’]

‘the viḷa tree with a worn-out trunk onto which a **seeing (animal)** / trap animal is tied’

(In this context **pārvai** refers to an animal [deer] used as an object for show. Such animals are used in hunting to attract and trap other animals.)

turuvaiyoṭu **veḷḷai** cēkkum ... varaippu (peru:153-154)

[**veḷḷai** ‘white’ is an adjective. Here it refers to an animal (sheep) which is white.]

‘the village where **the white** (sheep) lies down / goes to sleep with the red sheep’

cūr **maruṅku** aṟutta cuṭar ilai neṭu vēl ... murukaṇ (*aka.59:10*)

[**maruṅku** ‘vicinity, side.’ Here it refers to people in the vicinity, kith and kin.]

‘Murukaṇ, with a long spear with a shining leaf, who cut off / killed **the kith and kin** of the demon Cūr’

Nominal Compound

tiruntiḷai kaṇava (*pati.24:11*)

[**tiruntiḷai** ‘perfect ornaments’

< **tiruntu** ‘to be perfect’ + **iḷai** ‘ornaments’

Here it refers to a woman (the queen) wearing those perfect ornaments.]

‘O the husband of **the woman wearing perfect ornaments.**’

(Note that this is a compound which is normally referred to as an **anmolittokai**.)

Noun + Noun: Each noun can be a compound.

mānilamaṭantai (*cīru:1*)

[**mānilamaṭantai** < **mā nila(m)** + **maṭantai**

mā ‘vast’ + **nilam** ‘earth’ + **maṭantai** ‘lady’]

‘the **Lady Earth**’

kuḷavippaḷḷi (*cīru:46*)

[**kuḷavippaḷḷi**

< **kuḷavi** ‘wild jasmine’ + **paḷḷi** ‘bed/place for reclining’]

‘**bed of wild jasmine vine**’

pāmpaṇaippaḷḷi (*peru:373*)

[**pāmpaṇaippaḷḷi** < **pāmpaṇai** + **paḷḷi**

< **pāmpu** ‘snake(s)’ + **aṇai** ‘support’ + **paḷḷi** ‘bed/place for reclining’]

‘**bed of snake(s)**’

īkaiccennukam

(*ciṟu:113*)

[**īkaiccennukam** < **īkai** + **cennukam**

< **īkai** ‘bestowing, beneficence’ + **ce(m)** ‘perfect’ + **nukam** ‘yoke/bondage’]

‘**the perfect bondage of beneficence**’

ellai tarunaṇ

(*poru:233*)

[**ellai tarunaṇ** ‘the sun’

< **ellai** ‘shine, brightness; limit, boundary’ + **tarunaṇ** ‘one who gives/provides’]

‘**one who brings the shine**’; one who defines/brings the **limit** of daylight’

Noun + Noun + **āka**: The first noun is metaphorically spoken of as the second.

vāḷ matil āka vēḷ miḷai uyarttu

(*pati.33:7*)

[**vāḷ matil āka** ‘the sword (serving) as a fortress’

< **vāḷ** ‘sword’ + **matil** ‘fortress’ + **āka** ‘being/as’]

‘**raising a fence of spears with swords as the fortress**’

kaṇṇīr aruvi āka aḷumē tōḷi avar paḷamutir kuṇṇē

(*naṟṟ.88:8-9*)

[**kaṇṇīr aruvi āka** ‘tears as a waterfall.’

< **kaṇṇīr** ‘tears’ + **aruvi** ‘waterfall’ + **āka** ‘as; as it becomes’]

‘My friend, his hill, where fruits are ripening, is crying with **waterfall(s)** as its tears.’

nāṇu t taḷai āka vaiki māṇ viṇaikkū uṭampu āṇṭu oḷintamai allatai ...
 neñcam niṇ uḷaiyatuvē (aka.29:21-23)

[**nāṇu t taḷai āka** ‘bashfulness as a restraint’

< **nāṇu** ‘bashfulness’; **taḷai** ‘restraint, bondage’; **āka** ‘as’]

‘Except (for the fact) that my body was there, staying with **pride as** its **restraint** for the sake of the noble deed, my heart has (always) been with you.’

NOTES ON MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Doublets and Stacks

Classical Tamil uses stems in a certain repetitive fashion that the resulting forms can be called “doublets” (*irattai-k-kiḷavi*) or “stacks” (*aṭukku*) after the tradition.¹ Traditional grammars and traditional commentators on classical Tamil poems seem to differ slightly in their consideration of these forms. The traditional grammar *Tolkāppiyam*, which is applicable to classical Tamil poetry, makes a distinction between these two types of “repetitives,” whereas traditional commentators on poetry do not comment on the first type, the doublets (cf. *Tolkāppiyam*, *collatikāram*, *Cēṇāvaraiyam*, Rules 48, 411, and 424; the Old Commentary on *pari.2:75; 10:98*).

¹ Modern scholars discuss similar forms in modern Tamil under the label “intensives”: e.g., “Some notes on Dravidian intensives,” by Murray B. Emeneau.

Doublets (**iraṭṭai-k-kiḷavi**)

Three kinds seem to emerge in these forms. In the first kind, there is one stem with an adjectival quality which is repeated once. In the second, it is difficult to identify the repeated stem clearly as nominal or verbal. The third kind, which is different from the other two, has two stems which are nominal but convey opposite meanings.

One can determine their ultimate nominal or verbal quality in the first two kinds of doublets by the suffixes they take. It seems that the ultimate effect produced in the first kind is the intermittent characteristic or the intensity of the quality signified by the stem, while it is onomatopoeia in the second. In either case, a stem is repeated once resulting in a compound type (= stem₁ + stem₁), and subsequently a suffix is added to the stem on the right. The suffix then turns the duplicated stem into a nominal or a verbal form. Note that the first kind (the adjectival type) is used elsewhere in non-duplicated forms, while the second kind (the onomatopoeic type) is not.

As an example of a doublet of the first kind, consider *timil cuṭar ... mīṇoṭu puraiya paipaya imaikkum turaivaṇ* ‘The man from the shore-land where the flames of the lamps **twinkle gently**/intermittently like the stars’ (*narr.199:8-10*). Here, **pai** ‘soft, slow, feeble’ is the adjectival stem which is “doubled” as **pai + pai** and the suffix **a** is added yielding the adverbial form **paipaya** ‘slowly and slowly.’ Similarly, consider *ina vaṇṭu ... melmela icaikkum cāral* ‘mountain slope where groups of bees **hum very softly** (now and then)’ (*narr.176:8, 10*). Here, **mel** ‘soft’ is the adjectival stem which is duplicated as **mel + mel** and the suffix **a** is added subsequently yielding the adverbial form **melmela** ‘softly and softly; softly and slowly.’

Now, consider *vaiyai taṇ nāṇṇam mītu taṭam poḷil tāṇ yāṇṇu vem nāṇṇu vēcaṇai nāṇṇam kutukutuppa* ‘as the thick groves **kindled / bubbled up** a warm smell from the entering flood above/beyond the smell created by (the river) *Vaiyai ...*’ (*pari.20:12-13*). This example illustrates the

second kind of doublets, which is based on onomatopoeia. Here, **kutukutuppa** is an infinitive derived from **kutu + kutu + ppa**. The meaning of **kutu** is not transparent.² Now, consider **makāar aṇṇa manti ... muttam ... eruntin vayiṇṇu akattu aṭakki ... umaṭṭiyar ... putalvaroṭu kilukili āṭum ... koṛkai** ‘Koṛkai, where monkeys which are (dear) like children, pack the oyster shells with pearls and use them as **rattles** in their play with the children of the salt-merchant women’ (*ciṇu:56-62*). Here, the word **kilukili** ‘rattle’ (**kilu + kilu + i**) is a nominal. Similarly, in **kiṇkiṇi kavaiya oṇ ceṇ cīraṭi** ‘small bright red feet which are covered with **small bells** (*tiru:13*), **kiṇkiṇi** is a nominal derived from **kiṇ + kiṇ + i**. In the last two cases, the stems **kilu** and **kiṇ** give the onomatopoeic senses of rattling and jingling. Note that such stems are not used in classical Tamil poetry in a non-duplicated form.

The third type of doublet is basically different from the other two discussed above. In this type, two different nominal stems occur successively and seem to form a unit, so it has drawn the attention of traditional commentators. Both stems sound alike, and the stem on the right provides an opposite meaning to the one on the left. For example, consider **etir kutir ākiṇṇu atirppu** ‘The echo (**atirppu**) is becoming a **substantial response** to the **confrontation**’ (*pari.8:21*). In this context, **etir** means ‘facing, confrontation’ (verbal noun) originating from the stem **etir** ‘to confront’, whereas **kutir** means ‘substantial receptacle.’ Similarly, consider **ēru māru ēṛkum i-k-kuṇṇu** ‘This hill receives (**ēṛkum**) an acceptance/acknowledgement (**ēru**) as an opposition (**māru**)’ (*pari.18:6*). Here, **ēru** is derived from **ēl** ‘to accept, acknowledge, receive.’

² Quite conceivably, it means ‘bundling, shrugging’ and is related to **kūtir** which refers to the cold season. Cf. classical Tamil noun **kūtir** which refers to a granary and modern Tamil usages **kutu kutu** ‘shrugging/shivering in a feverish state’ and **kutūkalam** ‘excitement.’ The Old Commentary on *pari.20:12-13* translates **kutukutuppa** as ‘wishing for’, the significance of which is not obvious.

In fact, there is nothing special about the constructions **etir kutir ākinru** and **ēru māru ērkum**, except that they contain pairs of words (**etir** and **kutir**; **ēru** and **māru**) which convey opposite meanings within the pair. In both formations, the first two words (**etir**, **kutir**; **ēru**, **māru**) can be perceived as the “objects” of the third word which is the main verb (**ākinru**, **ērkum**). More importantly, each of these words (**etir**, **kutir**, **ēru**, and **māru**) is used elsewhere in isolation with its specific meaning. One traditional commentator notes that **etir kutir** and **ēru māru** are **ulaka valakku** ‘worldly usages’ or “non-poetic usages” (cf. Parimēlaḷakar’s commentary on *pari.8:21* and *pari.18:6*).

Stacks (**aṭukku**)

In a “stacked” construction, a nominal or a verbal form is repeated once or twice. The repeated nominal forms express a sense of multiplicity or distribution, while the repeated verb forms express intensity, certainty, urgency, and repetition of the action of the verb. This stacking technique seems to be somewhat productive in the sense that one finds in classical Tamil constructions in which the first form in the stack is a verbal noun which is followed by a finite form derived from the same stem, normally to express intense negation or a sense of unexpectedness/surprise. For examples of stacked constructions expressing possibility or probability, see “Concessive of Supposition.”

To understand how the sense of multiplicity is expressed by stacking, consider **nirai nirai piṭi cela** ‘as **row after row** (**many herds**) of female elephants passed by’ (*pari.2:26*). Here, the nominal **nirai** ‘row’ is repeated once to denote the multiplicity of the elephants. Consider, **kaṭumpoṭum kaṭumpoṭum** paravutum, literally, ‘Along with our **relatives** and **relatives** we pray to you’, meaning ‘We and the multitude of our kith and kin pray to you’ (*pari.2:75*). Note that here, the nominal **kaṭumpu** ‘relatives, family, kith and kin’ is declined first (**kaṭumpu** + **oṭu** associative case marker) to

which the particle **um** ‘and’ is added. Then the whole form **kaṭumpoṭum** is repeated once.

Now, notice the distributive sense expressed in the example **avar avar ēvalāḷanum** nīyē **avar avar cey poruṭku** araṇamum nīyē ‘You are the performer of **their** (= everyone’s) **respective tasks**. And you are the guard for **their respective deeds**’ (*pari.4:72-73*). Here, **avar** ‘they’ is repeated once and followed by **ēvalāḷan** to mean ‘performer of their/everyone’s respective tasks.’ Then it is followed by **cey poruṭ** to mean ‘their respective deeds.’ Similarly, consider āṅka iṇpamum kavīṇum aḷuṅkal mūtūr **nanpala nanpala nanpala**. Literally, it means ‘Thus, the pleasure and beauty in the noisy ancient city are **good-many, good-many, good-many**.’ The repetition of **nanpala** ‘good many’ (< nal ‘good, lovely’ + pala ‘many’) denotes the multiplicity of good things in the city (of Madurai) mentioned in this context. Note that the form **nanpala** is repeated twice to make the stack. Now, consider pētai **piṛaṅkal iṭai iṭai** p pukku ‘the naive woman went between the rocks and ...’ (*pari.19:58-59*), which is slightly different. Here, **iṭai** ‘between’ is repeated once and follows **piṛaṅkal** to mean ‘between the rocks.’ Awkward as it may sound in English, it must be understood that the repetition **iṭai iṭai** means ‘between and between’, meaning that the woman mentioned here went more than once between more than two rocks.

Now consider an example illustrating intensity: kōtai kōl āka **irukiruka yāttu** p puṭaippa ‘as she **tied** (him) up **very tightly** and beat (him) up with her garland’ (*pari.9:39-40*). Here, **irukiruka** ‘very tightly’ is derived from the repetition of the infinitive **iruka** < **iruku** ‘to be tight.’ As another example, consider māṇ pakalī aram tiṇ vāy **pōṇm pōṇm pōṇm**. ‘The fine arrows (i.e., women’s eyes) **are certainly like** the edges (i.e., blades of arrows) sharpened by a saw’ (*pari.10:97-99*). Here, the form **pōṇm** ‘is like’ is repeated twice expressing the certainty of the comparison.

When an imperative form is stacked, there is a sense of urgency or hastiness in the expression. For example, consider nillu nī nallāy makaḷirai

mainturru amarpurra maintar akalam kaṭikuvēm enpavai yārkkāṇum muṭi-poruḷ anru **muniyal muniyal** ‘Stop, O lovely woman! It is not possible for anyone to abstain from the wide chests of strong men who, with strength, desire women. (So) **do not hate! Do not hate!**’ Here, the negative imperative form **muniyal** (< **muni** ‘to hate, dislike’ + **al** suffix) is repeated once giving a sense of urgency, haste, or anxiety. For another example of this kind, consider naṟum taṇ mārvaṇ **innini** vārā māru kol ... eṇ nutal pacappatu ‘My lovely forehead is turning pale. Is it in response to the fact that the man with a cool good-smelling chest is not here **right now** / has not yet come, I wonder’ (*aink.222:2, 3, 4*). Here, **innini** ‘right now’ is the result of duplicating **in** ‘now.’

As for the sense of a repetitive action, consider pāṭunar **koḷa-k-koḷa** k kuṟaiyā c celvattu c cerrōr **kola-k-kola** k kuṟaiyā t tāṇai ‘wealth that has not become less (even) **as** the singers **took/received** it (again and again); the army that has not become less (even) **as** the enemies **killed** it (again and again)’ (*pati.82:12-13*). First, the infinitive **koḷa** ‘to take, receive’ is repeated once (**koḷa-k-koḷa**) expressing the repetition of the action and then another infinitive **kola** ‘to kill’ is repeated once (**kola-k-kola**) to convey a similar sense.

Consider kuṟavaṇ makaḷ āṇai kūṟalō kūṟēl ‘**Don’t** you ever swear by the name of the woman (Vaḷḷi) from the hill-tribe’ (*pari.8:69*). First, **kūṟal**, which is a negative verbal noun (< **kūru** ‘to state/proclaim’) is followed by the particle **ō**. Then the verb **kūru** is used in the negative imperative form, **kūṟēl** ‘do not proclaim’, to complete the stack. Similarly, consider iṇi yāṇ **uṇṇalum uṇṇēṇ vālalum vālēṇ** ‘Now, **I won’t ever eat; I won’t ever live**’ (*kali.23:7*). Here, **uṇṇalum uṇṇēṇ** is based on the verb stem **uṇ** ‘to eat’ and **vālalum vālēṇ** on **vāl** ‘to live/prosper/thrive.’ In each stack, the first form is a verbal noun (**uṇṇal** ‘eating’, **vālal** ‘living/thriving’), while the second is a negative finite verb (**uṇṇēṇ** and **vālēṇ**). Note that a particle (**um** ‘even’) intervenes between the two different verb forms (verbal noun and the finite verb).

Certain Affixes

The affixes **a**, **an**, **i**, **icin**, **in**, **u**, **ai**, **(k)k**, **ñ**, **(t)t**, **n**, **(p)p**, **m**, **y**, and **v** occur in more than one grammatical context, and therefore might cause some puzzlement in the reader. Because of the variety of tasks they perform, their original significance is not easy to infer. These affixes are not the only items which serve more than one grammatical task in classical Tamil. Similar items which occur only at the end of a word are included in the “Appendix.” The present section does not propose to resolve the puzzle. Rather, it alerts the readers to the existence of the puzzle and provides relevant information.

a:

In addition to being a suffix, it occurs in morphophonemic situations as an enunciative vowel.

morphophonemic process	verinattōl	(<i>pari.21:5</i>)
	vampā māri	(<i>kuṟu.66:5</i>)

an:

In addition to being a PNG, it occurs in the following contexts. Its basic function in nominal forms is to mark the obliqueness of the stem. Although it seems to carry the intrinsic meaning ‘like’, its significance in verb forms is not clear. In some contexts it seems to indicate a perfective aspect of the action denoted by the verb stem, but there is no consistent pattern.

adjectival noun	kālana	(<i>kuṟu.7:1</i>)
case form	ataṇāl	(<i>mull:17</i>)
non-past participial noun	koḷvana nāṭi	(<i>kali.82:19</i>)
	nīṇaivanaḷ	(<i>kali.44:18</i>)

oblique stem	atan	(<i>kali.52:3</i>)
past participial noun	tuṇintan ir ku	(<i>kali.8:7</i>)
past personal verb	kēṭṭan a m	(<i>mull:17</i>)
preceding a case marker/postposition	atan a koṇṭu	(<i>aka.32:9</i>)

i:

In addition to being a PNG, it occurs in the following contexts. In morphophonemic situations, it is enunciative. In other contexts, it seems to indicate the “totality” of a quality or “completion” of an action.

adjective	periya	(<i>puṛa.235:2</i>)
adverbial participle; past stem	vīci	(<i>matu:752</i>)
	vakaii	(<i>naṛṛ.120:5</i>)
causative form	uṇṇiyiṇaḷ	(<i>naṛṛ.8:5</i>)
morphophonemic process	tantāriyār	(<i>kali.84:32</i>)
	nōṇpiyar	(<i>naṛṛ.22:6</i>)
	tamiyaḷ	(<i>aka.5:2</i>)
	putitu	(<i>kali.53:5</i>)
	puttiyāṇai	(<i>kali.97:7</i>)

icin:

Its original significance is not clear. Besides functioning as a PNG, it occurs in the following contexts.

imperative/optative	vaṭittic in	(<i>puṛa.180:13</i>)
past participial noun	paṭaittic in ōr	(<i>puṛa.18:23</i>)
past personal verb	ceṇṇic in ōṇ	(<i>naṛṛ.300:6</i>)
preceding a particle	miḷimtic in āaṅku	(<i>puṛa.139:13</i>)

in:

In addition to being a suffix, it occurs in the following contexts. It marks the obliqueness of the stem in nominal forms. As a case marker, it is used to denote a wide range of meanings. Its significance in verb forms is not clear. In some contexts it seems to indicate the perfective aspect of the action denoted by the verb stem, but there is no consistent pattern.

adjectival noun	erutt <u>ina</u>	(<i>puṛa.387:7</i>)
adjectival participle	āy <u>ina</u>	(<i>pati.19:19</i>)
case form	matiy <u>in</u> ukku	(<i>kuru.395:4</i>)
oblique stem	at <u>in</u>	(<i>pari.11:36</i>)
past participial noun	vēṇṭ <u>in</u> arkku	(<i>peru:444</i>)
past personal verb	vēṇṭ <u>in</u> am	(<i>aka.26:15</i>)
	kavaiiy <u>inaṇ</u>	(<i>aiṅk.409:1</i>)
preceding a case marker/postposition	pōl <u>tin</u> kaṇ	(<i>kali.82:10</i>)

u:

Besides being a PNG and a verbal noun suffix, its basic function seems to be that of a formative/enunciative suffix.

adverbial participle	peytu	(<i>peru:96</i>)
morphophonemic process	nāṇ <u>ukku</u> raivilaḷ	(<i>pari.12:49</i>)

ai:

In addition to being a PNG, it occurs in the following contexts. Its original significance is not clear.

accusative case form	ampal <u>ai</u> nāṇi	(<i>kali.3:1</i>)
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adverb	vallai	(<i>aiṅk.425:3</i>)
morphophonemic process	pārāṭṭaippāl	(<i>kali.85:33</i>)
verbal noun	naṭai	(<i>naṟṟ.92:2</i>)

k(u):

In addition to being a case marker, it signifies the non-past/non-completive aspect of the action of the verb stem to which it is attached. It also has a non-causative/affective significance. It occurs in the following contexts.

adverb	naṅku	(<i>matu:82</i>)
comparison	vāliyōṟku ... ilaiyan	(<i>pari.2:20-21</i>)
formative suffix; glide	maḷuku	(<i>aka.5:12</i>)
	iluki	(<i>puṟa.281:3</i>)
	ciṟukitai	(<i>pari.10:106</i>)
imperative/optative	tīrka	(<i>kuṟu.251:4</i>)
infinitive	niṟka	(<i>puṟa.126:13</i>)
negative forms	nuḷaikallā	(<i>puṟa.21:5</i>)
	ivarkallātu	(<i>kuṟu.287:6</i>)
	aṟikallāy	(<i>kali.95:26</i>)
	kaḷaikalam	(<i>kuṟu.400:2</i>)
participle, adjectival	kaṭkum	(<i>kuṟu.100:2</i>)
personal verbs, non-past	nukarku	(<i>kuṟi:181</i>)
	cey kuvai	(<i>pati.36:14</i>)
	amaikum	(<i>aka.6:15</i>)
	kāṅkam	(<i>naṟṟ.81:9</i>)

kk(u):

In addition to being a case marker, it signifies the non-past/non-completive aspect of the action of the verb stem to which it is attached. It also has a causative/effective significance. It occurs in the following contexts.

causative/effective	malarkkunar	(<i>puṛa.103:3</i>)
	tīrkka	(<i>puṛa.155:2</i>)
imperative/optative	ciṛakka	(<i>matu:194</i>)
infinitive	maṛakka	(<i>aiṅk.470:5</i>)
negative forms	paṛakkallā	(<i>matu:231</i>)
	niṛukkallātu	(<i>aka.198:2</i>)
	uraikkallāṇ	(<i>kali.37:5</i>)
participle, adjectival	niṇaikkum	(<i>puṛa.217:1</i>)
personal verbs, non-past	kākkam	(<i>puṛa.281:7</i>)
	irukkuvēṇ	(<i>kali.142:32</i>)
	pulikkum	(<i>kuṛu.354:2</i>)

ñ:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word. It occurs in adjectival nouns and non-past participial nouns, and basically indicates the non-past/non-completive aspect of an action/state.

adjectival noun	valaiñar	(<i>peru:274</i>)
non-past participial noun	eṛiñar	(<i>aka.71:11</i>)

t:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word, but appears in the following contexts. It seems to have a completive significance, but not in negative forms. It also has a non-causative/affective significance. Its original signification is not clear.

imperative/optative	pōrruti	(kali.65:9)
infinitive	pukuta	(pari.22:11)
non-causative form	pukutum	(narr.171:5)
non-past stem	eṇṇutir	(aka.5:16)
negative form	ceyyāta	(kali.81:27)
past stem	peyt(u)	(peru.96)

tt:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word, but appears in the following contexts. It seems to have a past/completive and/or causative/effective significance. It is the changed form of the word-final **m** in an oblique stem.

causative/transitive form	naṭatta	(pari.10:43)
	uyartta	(tiru.158)
imperative/optative	kātti	(pari.6:86)
oblique stem	ulakattu	(pura.174:20)
non-past personal verb	pulattiyāl	(aka.39:25)
past personal verb	viyarttanēn	(kuru.84:1)

n:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word, but appears in adjectival nouns and non-past participial nouns. Basically, it indicates the non-past/non-completive aspect of an action/state.

adjectival noun	viṇainar	(pati.62:16)
non-past participial noun	piṛaṇa	(pati.13:1)
	malarkkunar	(pura.103:3)
	kuyinar	(matu.511)

p:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word, but appears in the following contexts. It basically signifies the non-past/non-completive aspect of an action. It also has a non-causative/affective significance.

infinitive; non-causative form	nir pa	(<i>aka.50:4</i>)
non-past personal verb	kāṇ pal	(<i>pati.77:12</i>)
non-past participial noun	koṭ pa ṇa	(<i>kali.105:22</i>)

pp:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word, but appears in the following contexts. It basically signifies the non-past/non-completive aspect of an action. It also has a causative/effective significance.

causative form	uṇar pp avaḥ	(<i>kali.72:4</i>)
	malar pp ōr	(<i>puṛa.179:3</i>)
	utir pp a	(<i>kuṛu.278:5</i>)
infinitive	maṛ pp a	(<i>puṛa.68:19</i>)
non-past participial noun	iru pp avar	(<i>aka.389:10</i>)
non-past personal verb	ura pp al	(<i>aka.28:2</i>)

m:

In addition to occurring as a suffix at the end of a word, it is found in the following contexts. Its original significance is not clear.

glide	kuḷ ma	(<i>matu.677</i>)
non-past form	uṇ mar	(<i>pati.24:18</i>)

y:

It basically signifies the past/completive aspect of an action, and occurs in the following contexts.

adverbial participle	ulāy	(paṭṭ:233)
glide	kōyil	(neṭu:100)
past form	viṇāyiṇaṇ	(kali.68:16)

v:

It never occurs as a suffix at the end of a word, but appears in the following contexts. It basically signifies the non-past/non-completive aspect of an action. It has a non-causative/affective significance.

glide, affirmative verb	nōval	(aka.63:3)
glide, negative verb	nōvēṇ	(aka.63:3)
non-past participial noun; non-causative		
	utirva	(pari.2:44)
non-past personal verb	aṇivēṇ	(kuru.352:6)
	vāḷval	(pura.245:7)

ANALYSIS OF A FEW POEMS

GENERAL: Rules of sentence construction in Tamil poetry are not always predictable. Classical Tamil poetry, in particular, provides a challenge in that its narrative nature thrives on creating several kinds of structural suspense. Sometimes the poem has to be read until the last word to find the theme of the poem or the subject of the main sentence, as will be seen in the last poem discussed below.

The basic idea of a classical Tamil poem can be obtained from the verbs and nouns in it. The minute details about each noun and each verb contribute to the development of the poem. These details are either explicit or are embedded in the items surrounding each noun and each verb.

One can ask the following elementary questions about a classical Tamil noun: Who/What is it?; What sort of a thing/person is it?; Where is the thing/person?; and/or what does it / the person do? The meaning/identification of the noun gives the answer to the first question: Who/What is it? Example: **maḷai** 'cloud(s)' in the first poem (*aiṅkuruṇūru* 423) discussed below. The modifier (**mā** 'dark') preceding the noun **maḷai** and forming a compound with it gives the answer to the second question, what sort of a thing/person is it: **mā maḷai** 'dark cloud(s).' The verbs associated with the

noun **maḷai** give the answer to the third question, what does it/the person do: **iṭiyūu** ‘while thundering’ and **corintanru** ‘it poured.’ Thus, **mā maḷai iṭiyūu ... corintanru ē** tells us that ‘Dark clouds, poured, (while) thundering.’

Similarly, one can ask several elementary questions about a classical Tamil verb: What is the action indicated?; Who did/will do the action?; What precedes the action?; and/or in what manner is/will the action be done and so on. A personal verb contains information about the doer of the action indicated by the verb stem, whereas the noun(s) associated with the personal verb give(s) the answer to who/what did the action or what/who experienced the action. A verbal participle associated with the personal verb provides information about what precedes or will follow the action and the manner in which the action is done and so on. Example: The verb **corintanru** ‘it poured’ in the first poem discussed below (*aiṅkurunūru* 423) tells us that the doer of the “task of pouring” is a third person neuter singular “it.” The noun **taḷi** ‘raindrops’ is the experiencer (i.e., the object) of the verb **corintanru** ‘it poured.’ The other noun associated with the personal verb **corintanru** is **maḷai** ‘cloud(s).’ The verbal participle **iṭiyūu** ‘while thundering’, an infinitive in this context, tells us that thunder precedes/occurs with the pouring of raindrops. Thus, the nominals (**mā**, **maḷai**, **taḷi**) and the verbals (**iṭiyūu**, **corintanru**) together present a picture of the rain: **mā maḷai iṭiyūu t taḷi corintanrē** ‘Dark clouds, thundering, poured raindrops.’ In the final analysis, it seems that a stack of nominal modifiers and verbal participles is sufficient to fabricate a large poem from two basic units, a noun and a verb.

Broadly speaking, a classical Tamil poem is made of several units of meaning where each unit contains at least one of the following grammatical items: (i) a **noun**, declined or undeclined (ii) a **noun** preceded by an adjective, (iii) a **noun** followed by a postposition or particle, (iv) an **adjectival participle** followed by a noun or postposition, (v) a **verbal participle**, (vi) a **finite verb** followed sometimes by a particle, and (vii) an **imperative**. The term “breakpoint” is useful to refer to these items.

A breakpoint marks the end of a nominal compound, noun phrase, postpositional phrase, or a verb clause. Furthermore, it bears a semantic relation to the word preceding it or following it or to the next breakpoint. Therefore, words which precede or follow a given breakpoint or participate in forming the nominal compound, noun phrase, postpositional phrase, or verb clause have to be taken together with the breakpoint for a meaningful interpretation.

If the breakpoint is a nominal (a noun, declined or undeclined, with or without a particle or postposition), then a link may exist either with the following word or the next break point. If the breakpoint is a verbal participle, it is linked, more often than not, to the next breakpoint rather than to the word immediately following it unless the latter is a breakpoint. A breakpoint which is an imperative may have a semantic relation with the preceding word, the following word, or the next breakpoint.

ANALYSIS OF THREE POEMS

In the preceding pages, certain conclusive statements have been made about the order in which affixes are joined to stems, the manner in which modifiers like the adjectives and adverbs precede the modified, and how nominal and verbal participles are related to their head nouns and main verbs. Three classical Tamil poems (*aiṅkuraṇūru* 423, *puṇaṇāṇūru* 278, and *akanāṇūru* 9) are analyzed now to illustrate how the various items in a poem are interconnected.

aiṅkuṛunūru 423

The poem as it would appear in a printed text:

māmaḷai yiṭiyūut taḷicorin taṇṇē மாமழை யிடியூஉத் தளிசொரிந் தன்றே
vāṇutal pacappac celavayarn taṇaiyē வாணுதல் பசப்பச் செலவயர்ந் தனையே
yāmē niṇṇuṇan tamaiyalam யாமே நிறுந் தமையலம்
āymala ruṇkaṇu nīṇṇirain taṇavē ஆய்மல ருண்கணு நீர்நிறைந் தனவே

Applying morphophonemic rules, the individually meaningful items can be separated as follows:

mā maḷai y iṭiyūu t taḷi corintaṇṇ(u) ē மா மழை இடியூஉ த் தளி சொரிந்தன்று-ஏ
vāḷ nutal pacappa c celav(u) ayaṇtaṇṇai ē வாள் நுதல் பசப்ப ச் செலவு அயர்ந்தனை-ஏ
yām ē niṇ tuṇant(u) amaiyalam யாம்-ஏ நின்-துறந்து அமையலம்
āy malar uṇkaṇ um nīr niṇaintaṇa v ē ஆய்மலர் உண்கண்-உம் நீர் நிறைந்தன -ஏ

Here, the various items in the poem are identified with their meanings:

item	meaning	grammatical identification
mā	dark/black	adjective
maḷai	cloud(s)	noun
iṭiyūu	thundering	infinitive < iṭi 'to thunder'
taḷi	raindrop(s)	noun

corintanru	it poured	personal verb 3rd person neuter singular < cori 'to pour'
ē	[theme separator] [gives a sense of pity, anxiety]	particle
vāl	bright	adjective
nuta	forehead	noun
pacappa	becoming pale	infinitive < paca 'to turn pale'
celavu	journey	verbal noun < cel 'to leave'
ayarntanai	you have undertaken	personal verb, 2nd person singular < ayar 'to engage in, undertake'
ē	[theme separator] [gives a sense of anxiety, lamentation, reluctance]	particle
yām	we	pronoun; 1st person exc.pl.
ē	[theme separator]	particle
niṇ	you	oblique of 1st person singular pronoun nī 'you'
tuṛantu	having renounced; renouncing	adverbial participle < tuṛa 'to renounce, depart from'
amaiyalam	we will not be calm	negative personal verb 1st person exc.pl. < amai 'to be calm, be at rest'
āy	wilt, droop, fade, select	verb stem
malar	flower(s)	noun
uṇ	eat, devour, enjoy	verb stem
kaṇ	eye(s)	noun
um	and, also, too	particle
nīr	water, tears	noun
niṛaintaṇa	they are filled with	personal verb, 3rd person neuter plural < niṛai 'to fill'

ē [theme separator,
marks the end of a poem] particle

The whole poem is paraphrased first without bringing in any knowledge of the literary conventions:

mā maḷai iṭiyūu taḷi corintaṇru ē
The dark cloud poured raindrops while thundering, indeed
vāḷ nutal pacappa celavu ayaṁtaṇai ē
But you have undertaken a journey while the bright forehead
has turned pale
yām ē niṇ tuṇantu amaiyalam
We, on the other hand, cannot be calm, renouncing you
āy malar uṇ kaṇ um nīr niṇaintaṇa ē
Also the seductive eyes, which resemble fading/selected flow-
ers, are filled with tears¹

With a conventional understanding of the phrases in the poem, we can have the following interpretation:

The thundering dark cloud has poured raindrops, indeed²
But you have undertaken a journey as (your lover's) bright forehead
has turned pale (due to the anxiety of separation)

¹ The phrase **āy malar uṇ kaṇ** is ambiguous yielding more than one interpretation: 'eyes like fading flowers/selected flowers.' The interpretation of **āy malar** 'fading flowers' vs. 'selected flowers' depends on how one perceives the expression in the eyes of a woman whose lover, the hero, is about to depart on a journey without her.

² This line refers to the rainy season which is the time when the hero normally returns home to his lover/wife from various assignments such as seeking wealth or helping the king in war.

*Whereas, we (your lover and I, her female friend) cannot be calm
separated from you
The seductive eyes (of your lover), which (now) resemble fading
flowers, are filled with tears*

A more elegant translation:³

*Dark clouds
Thundering
Let loose their rain:
her bright forehead has gone pale
now that you're to go away.*

*Still, we haven't deserted you.
No peace for us
any more —*

*deadly eyes
fading like flowers
are flooded with tears.*

Each line in this poem is a complete sentence, each of which has its main verb at the end of the line. Each sentence, except the last, contains a subordinate clause marked by a verbal participle (a breakpoint). The sentences are broken down into significantly meaningful units:

³ This translation was provided by David D. Shulman.

Line 1: mā maḷai iṭiyūu t taḷi corintaṇṇ(u) ē

Meaningful units:

- 1.1. mā maḷai iṭiyūu 'dark cloud(s) thundering'
- 1.2. taḷi corintaṇṇu ē 'it poured raindrops'

Line 2: vāḷ nutal pacappa c celav(u) ayaṇṭaṇai ē

Meaningful units:

- 2.1. vāḷ nutal pacappa
'while the bright forehead has turned pale'
- 2.2. celavu ayaṇṭaṇai ē
'you have undertaken a journey'

Line 3: yām ē niṇ tuṇantu amaiyalam

Meaningful units:

- 3.1. yām ē 'we, on the other hand'
- 3.2. niṇ tuṇantu amaiyalam
'we will not be calm, renouncing you'

Line 4: āy malar uṇkaṇ um nīṇ nīṇaintaṇa ē

Meaningful units:

- 4.1. āy malar uṇkaṇ um
'also the seductive eyes like fading flowers'
- 4.2. nīṇ nīṇaintaṇa ē 'are filled with tears'

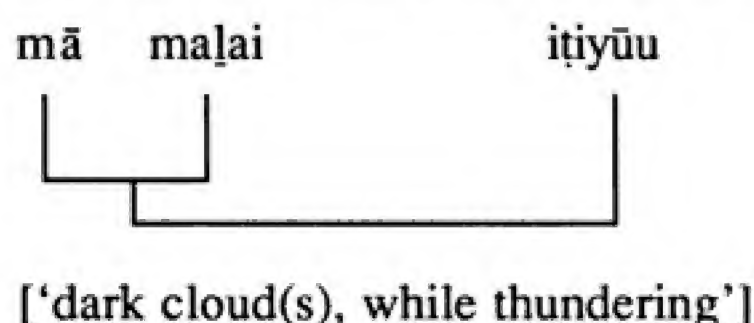
The first meaningful unit in Line 1 is **mā maḷai iṭiyūu**. The adjective **mā** 'dark' and the noun **maḷai** 'cloud(s)' constitute the nominal compound **mā maḷai** 'dark cloud(s)':

mā maḷai

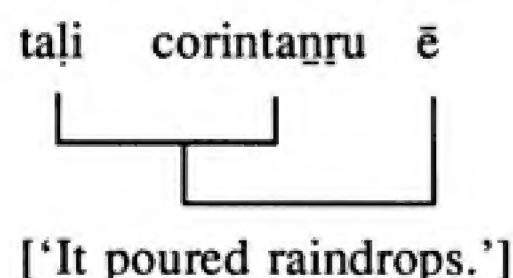
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['dark cloud(s)']

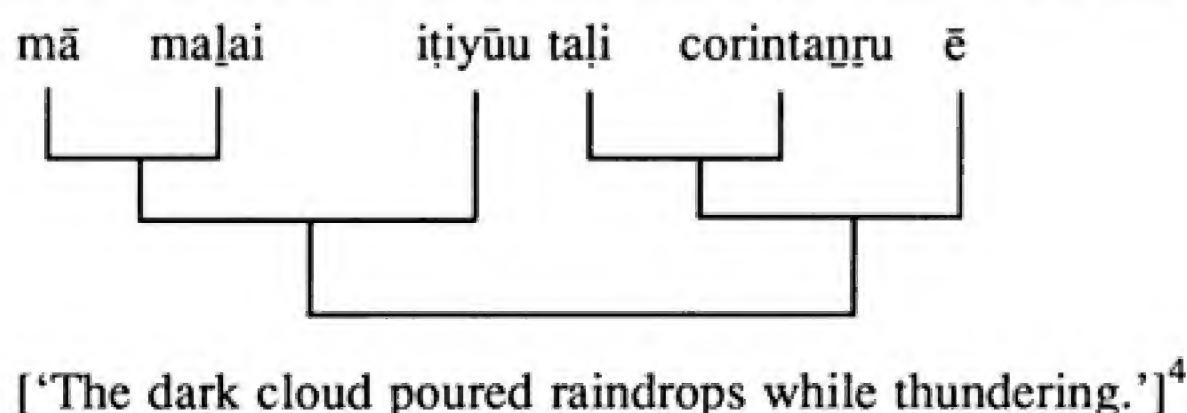
The head noun **maḷai** ‘cloud(s)’ in this compound functions as the subject of the infinitive **iṭiyūu** ‘while thundering.’ The sequence **mā maḷai iṭiyūu** ‘dark cloud(s), while thundering’ has an incomplete sense:



This infinitive clause has its sense completed when taken together with the next unit **taḷi corintaṇru ē**, which has the following structure:



The word **taḷi** ‘raindrop(s)’ is the object of **maḷai** ‘cloud(s)’ in the preceding unit. Taken together, **mā maḷai iṭiyūu taḷi corintaṇru ē** can be understood as ‘Alas, the dark cloud(s) poured raindrops, while thundering.’



⁴ In fact, the word **maḷai** means ‘cloud’ or ‘clouds.’ Here, the choice of the singular meaning is determined by the finite verb **corintaṇru** which is singular.

Line 2, **vāḷ nutal pacappa celavu ayaṛntānai ē**, contains the subordinate clause **vāḷ nutal pacappa** ‘as/whereas the bright forehead has turned pale’ and the main sentence **celavu ayaṛntānai ē** ‘you have undertaken a journey.’ The three items in the subordinate clause (**vāḷ nutal pacappa**) are connected in the following way. The adjective **vāḷ** ‘bright’ and the noun **nutaḷ** ‘forehead’ form the compound **vāḷ nutaḷ** ‘bright forehead’, which in turn, functions as the subject of the infinitive **pacappa** ‘as it turned pale.’

vāḷ nutaḷ pacappa



[‘as the bright forehead has turned pale’]⁵

The next meaningful unit **celavu ayaṛntānai ē** ‘But you have undertaken a journey’ is a complete sentence.

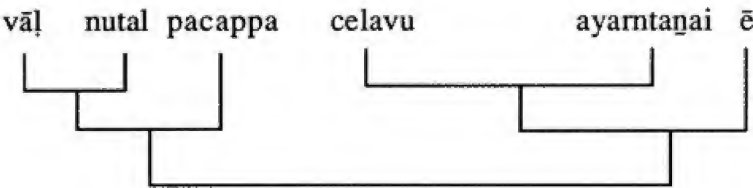
celavu ayaṛntānai ē



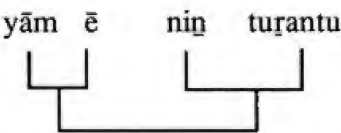
[‘But you have undertaken a journey.’]

However, this unit is modified by the preceding clause **vāḷ nutal pacappa**.

⁵ Some might interpret **vāḷ nutaḷ** as metonymically referring to the heroine whose forehead is talked about in this context.



Line 3, **yām ē niṇ tuṟantu amaiyaḷam**, contains a subordinate clause **yāmē niṇ tuṟantu** ‘we, on the other hand, renouncing you’ and the main verb **amaiyaḷam** ‘we will not be calm.’⁶ The pronoun **yām** is the subject of the adverbial participle **tuṟantu** and the main verb **amaiyaḷam**. The oblique form **niṇ** is the object of the adverbial participle **tuṟantu**. The items in the adverbial participle clause **yāmē niṇ tuṟantu** can be connected as follows:

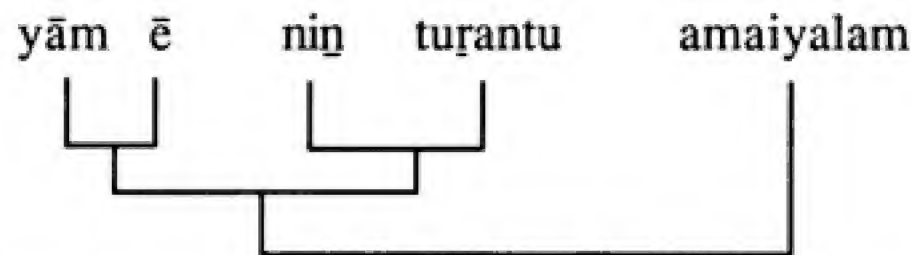


[‘We, on the other hand, renouncing you ...’]⁷

⁶ It is possible to interpret **niṇ tuṟantu** as ‘being separated from you.’ The reason for interpreting the phrase literally to mean ‘renouncing you’ is as follows: (a) grammatically, **niṇ** serves as the object of **tuṟantu** rather than holding an ablative case relation (‘from’) with **tuṟantu** or anything else; (b) the time spoken of is the rainy season when the hero normally returns to her lover, but if the hero were to undertake a journey in the rainy season without his lover, it would only mean that he has the inner strength to do so. Thus, the speaker in the poem (the female friend of the heroine) seems to chide the hero, implying that whereas it might be possible for the hero to renounce his lover, it is not possible for his lover (and her female companion who has to comfort her) to renounce him.

⁷ The particle **ē** is interpreted to give the sense ‘whereas, on the other hand.’

The main verb **amaiyalam** ‘we will not be calm’ has **yām** ‘we’ as its subject. Thus, Line 3 has the following structure:



[‘We, on the other hand, will not be calm renouncing you.’]

Line 4, **āy malar uṇ kaṇ nīr nīraintaṇavē**, has the subject **āy malar uṇ kaṇ** ‘seductive eyes (now) like fading flowers’ and the main verb **nīraintaṇa** ‘are filled (with tears)’.⁸ The phrase **āy malar uṇ kaṇ** contains two nominal compounds (**āy malar**; **uṇ kaṇ**). The juxtaposition of these compounds poses an interesting problem. It is certain that **kaṇ** ‘eyes’ are compared to **malar** ‘flowers.’⁹ The question is whether the comparison is based on the similarity between the fading nature of the flowers and the sadness in the heroine’s eyes or the similarity between the selected feature of beautiful flowers and the seductive beauty of the heroine’s eyes? Grammar does not help the reader here. The compounds **āy malar** ‘fading flowers’ and **uṇ kaṇ** ‘seductive eyes’ can be connected thus:

⁸ Note that **uṇ kaṇ** is interpreted to mean ‘seductive eyes’ because **uṇ** means ‘eat/consume/enjoy.’ Some might interpret **uṇ kaṇ** to mean ‘eyes which have eaten/consumed collyrium’ on the basis of the fact that women beautify their eyes with collyrium.

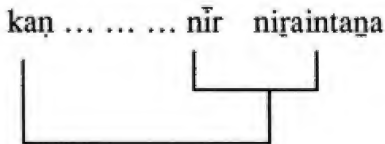
Also ‘seductive eyes’ and ‘eyes like fading flowers’ may seem to provide conflicting images. One could ask ‘How can fading eyes also be seductive?’ and therefore might interpret **āy malar uṇ kaṇ** to mean ‘seductive eyes like selected flowers.’ As pointed out in note 1, the interpretation is determined by the reader’s choice.

⁹ See “Comparison” for an explanation of this kind of comparison.



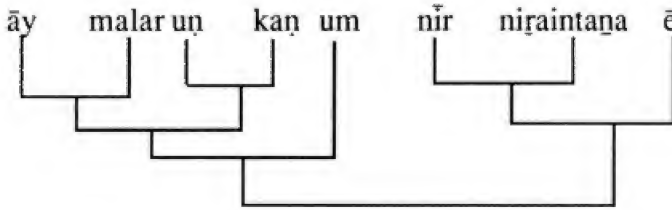
[‘seductive eyes (now) like fading flowers’]

The particle **um** which is appended to **kaṇ** ‘eyes’ provides the sense ‘and, also, too, moreover.’ Therefore, the phrase **āy malar uṇ kaṇum** ‘moreover, the seductive eyes like fading flowers’ has an incomplete sense. The next part **nīr niraīntaṇavē** ‘They are filled with tears’ in this line brings a complete sense to the whole line. The subject of the finite verb **niraīntaṇa** is **kaṇ** and the object is **nīr**.



[‘The eyes are filled with tears.’]

āy malar uṇ kaṇum nīr niraīntaṇa means ‘Also the seductive eyes, now like fading flowers, are filled with tears.’ The particle **ē** appended to **niraīntaṇa** marks the end of the poem and considering the tone of the whole poem, can be taken to provide a sense of reluctance and sympathy. In fact, the particle **ē** at the end of lines 1, 3, and 4 provides a mixed sense of anxiety, pity, reluctance, and sympathy.



[Moreover, the seductive eyes, now like fading flowers, are filled with tears.]

The basic idea of the poem is this: 'The cloud has poured raindrops. You have undertaken a journey. We will not be calm when separated from you. Your lover's eyes are filled with tears.' The following items are sufficient to convey the basic idea: **maḷai** 'cloud(s)', **cori** 'to pour', **celavu** 'journey', **ayarntanai** 'you have undertaken', **amaiyalam** 'we will not be calm', **kaṇ** 'eye(s)', **nīr** 'tears', and **nīṟaintaṇa** 'are filled.' However, they do not make up a poem; they are just a list of core words.

The development of core words into a poem is achieved through craftsmanship. Understanding the meaning of the words depends upon a good grasp of the grammar. An appreciation of the poem is achieved through knowledge of the poetic conventions.¹⁰

puṛaṇāṇūru 278

A poem which is slightly larger and more complex in syntax than *aiṅkuṛuṇūru* 423 is discussed next. This poem, *puṛaṇāṇūru* 278, is about a heroic mother. The mother is disturbed by the rumour that her son faced defeat and retreated from the battle. Ashamed of her son's alleged defeat,

¹⁰ See "Theory of Classical Tamil Poetry" in this study and Ramanujan's *Poems of Love and War* (1985:231-297) for discussions of classical Tamil poetic conventions.

the heroic mother takes an oath to tear off her breasts which nursed the (coward) son when he was a baby, if indeed he fled from the battle. With a sword in her hand, she proceeds to the battlefield, looks for her son, and finds out that he is among the fallen heroes. At that, she is ecstatic; her joy surpasses the joy she experienced long ago when she gave birth to him. The poem is given below after morphophonemic rules are applied:

narampu eḷuntu ulaṛiya nirampā meṇ tōḷ

நரம்பு எழுந்து உலறிய நிரம்பா மென் தோள்

mulari maruṅkiṇ mutiyōḷ ciṛuvaṇ

முளரி மருங்கின் முதியோள் சிறுவன்

paṭai aḷintu māṛinaṇ eṇṛu palar kūṛa

படை அழிந்து மாறினன் என்று பலர் கூற

maṇṭu amarkku uṭaintaṇaṇ āyiṇ uṇṭa eṇ

மண்டு அமார்க்கு உடைந்தனன் ஆயின் உண்ட என்

mulai aṛuttu iṭuveṇ yāṇ eṇa ciṇaii

முலை அறுத்து இடுவென் யான் என சினைஇ

koṇṭa vāḷoṭu paṭu piṇam peyarā

கொண்ட வாளொடு படு பிணம் பெயரா

cem kaḷam tuḷavuvōḷ citaintu vēṛu ākiya

செம் களம் துழவுவோள் சிதைந்து வேறு ஆகிய

paṭu makaṇ kiṭakkai kāṇūu

படு மகன் கிடக்கை காணூஉ

īṇṛa ṇāṇṛiṇum peritu uvantaṇaḷ ē

ஈன்ற ஞான்றினும் பெரிது உவந்தனளே

The poem can be rearranged according to its individually meaningful units:

narampu eḷuntu ulaṛiya nirampā meṇ tōḷ

நரம்பு எழுந்து உலறிய நிரம்பா மென் தோள்

muḷari maruṅkiṇ mutiyōḷ

முளரி மருங்கின் முதியோள்

ciṟuvaṇ paṭai aḷintu māṟiṇaṇ enṟu palar kūṟa

சிறுவன் படை அழிந்து மாறினன் என்று பலர் கூற

maṇṭu amarkku uṭaintaṇaṇ āyiṇ

மண்டு அமர்க்கு உடைந்தனன் ஆயின்

uṇṭa eṇ mulai aṟuttu iṭuveṇ yāṇ eṇa ciṇaii

உண்ட என் முலை அறுத்து இடுவென் யான் என சினைஇ

koṇṭa vāḷoṭu paṭu piṇam peyarā cem kaḷam tuḷavuvōḷ

கொண்ட வாளொடு படு பிணம் பெயரா செம் களம் துழவுவோள்

citaintu vēṟu ākiya paṭu makaṇ kiṭakkai kāṇūu

சிதைந்து வேறு ஆகிய படு மகன் கிடக்கை காணூஉ

īṇra ṇāṇṟiṇum peritu uvantaṇaḷ ē

ஈன்ற ஞான்றினும் பெரிது உவந்தனளே

The various items with their meanings and grammatical identifications:

item	meaning	grammatical identification
narampu	nerves, veins	noun
eḷuntu	rising	adverbial participle < elu 'to rise, swell'
ulaṟiya	dried, without luster	adjectival participle < ulaṟu 'to dry up, lose luster'
nirampā	not filled, empty	adjectival participle, negative < nirampu 'to be full'
meṇ	soft, tender	adjective
tōḷ	shoulder(s)	noun

muḷari	thorny, bony	noun
maruṇku	waist	noun
iṇ	of, with	case marker, genitive
mutiyōḷ	old woman	adjectival noun
		3rd person feminine singular
		< mutu 'old'
ciṛuvaṇ	small boy, son	noun
paṭai	weapon, arms	noun
aḷintu	having perished	adverbial participle < aḷi 'to perish'
māṛiṇaṇ	he moved away	personal verb, past
		3rd person masculine singular
		< māṛu 'to move away, retreat'
eṇṛu	thus, that	quotative, adverbial participle
		< eṇ 'to say'
palar	many people	adjectival noun
		3rd person human plural
		< pal 'many'
kūṛa	as (they) stated	infinitive < kūṛu 'to state, declare'
maṇṭu	rushing	verb stem; here, adjectival participle
amarkku	in response to the army	dative case
		amar 'war, warriors'
		kku, case marker
uṭaintaṇaṇ	he broke down	personal verb, past
		3rd person masculine singular
		< uṭai 'to break down'
āyiṇ	if it is	conditional < ā 'to be'
uṇṭa	sucked	adjectival participle
eṇ	my	oblique of yāṇ 'I'
mulai	breasts	noun
aṛuttu	having severed	adverbial participle
		< aṛu 'to sever, cut off'

itūven	I will throw down; drop	personal verb, 1st person singular < itū 'to drop'
yān	I	pronoun, 1st person singular
eṇa	thus, that	quotative; infinitive of eṇ 'to think'
ciṇaii	getting angry	adverbial participle < ciṇa 'to get angry'
koṇṭa	(that which was) taken	adjectival participle < koḷ 'to have, take hold'
vāloṭu	with the sword	instrumental case vāl 'sword'; oṭu, case marker
paṭu	lying, dying, falling	verb stem paṭu 'to die, lie down'
piṇam	corpse	noun
peyarā	removing	infinitive < peyar 'to remove'
cem	red	adjective
kaḷam	field	noun
tuḷavuvōḷ	she who stirs up	participial noun, non-past 3rd person feminine singular < tuḷavu 'to stir up'
citaintu	having been deformed	adverbial participle < citai 'to be deformed'
vēru	different	noun
ākiya	that which/who became	X adjectival participle < āku 'to become'
paṭu	lying, falling	verb stem paṭu 'to lie down; fall; die'
makaṇ	son	noun
kiṭakkai	lying state	verbal noun < kiṭa 'to lie still'
kāṇūu	seeing, viewing	infinitive < kāṇ 'to see, view'
īṇra	when X gave birth	adjectival participle < īṇ 'to give birth'

ñāṇṛiṇum	more than when	comparison ñāṇṛu 'time, moment' iṇum comparative marker
peritu	bigger, more	adjectival noun < per(u) 'big'
uvantaṇaḷ	she rejoiced	personal verb, past 3rd person feminine singular < uva 'to rejoice'
ē	indeed	particle

The lines in the poem are translated below according to their individually meaningful units:

narampu eḷuntu ulaṛiya nirampā meṇ tōḷ muḷari maruṅkiṇ **mutiyōḷ**
*The old woman with emaciated waist and soft, dry, lean
shoulders with visible veins*

ciṛuvaṇ paṭai aḷintu māṛiṇaṇ eṇṛu palar kūṛa
*as many people stated that the boy retreated, his weapons
destroyed*

maṇṭu amarkku uṭaintaṇaṇ āyiṇ
"if he broke down in response to the rushing army"

uṇṭa eṇ mulai aruttu iṭuven eṇa **cinaii**
*getting angry thinking, "I shall cut off and throw down my
breasts which he sucked"*

koṇṭa vāḷoṭu paṭu piṇam peyarā cem kaḷam tuḷavuvōḷ
*she, who stirs up the red field,
moving the corpses with a sword*

citaintu vēṛu ākiya paṭu makaṇ kiṭakkai **kāṇūu**
seeing the lying state of her dying son, deformed and different

īṇṛa ñāṇṛiṇum peritu **uvantaṇaḷ** ē
*(she) rejoiced more than she did
when she gave birth to him*

6. koṇṭa vāloṭu paṭu piṇam peyarā cem kaḷam tuḷavuvōl
(participial noun phrase)
[‘she, who stirs up the red field, moving the
corpses with a sword’]

7. citaintu vēru ākiya paṭu maṇṇ kiṭakkai **kāṇūu** (infinitive clause)
[‘seeing the lying state of her dying son,
deformed and different’]

['soft, dry, lean shoulders wherein the veins are swelling']

muḷari maruṅku

[‘thorny/bony waist’]

The genitive case marker **in** connects the phrase **narampu eḷuntu ulaṛiya nirampā meṇ tōḷ muḷari maruṅku** with the next item **mutiyōḷ**, which is a breakpoint.

narampu eḷuntu ulaṛiya nirampā meṇ tōḷ muḷari maruṅku **in**

mutiyōḷ

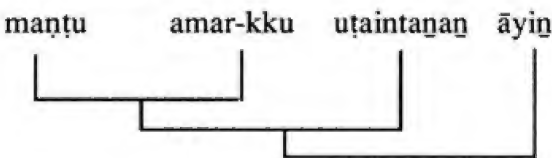
[‘the old woman **with** emaciated waist and soft, dry, lean shoulders showing the veins’]

The third unit is an infinitive clause embedding a finite sentence: **cīruvaṇ paṭai aḷintu māṛiṇaṇ eṇru palar kūṛa** ‘as many people stated “The boy moved away, his weapons destroyed.” ’

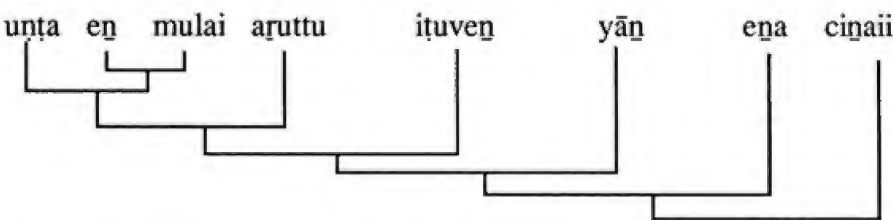
cīruvaṇ paṭai aḷintu māṛiṇaṇ eṇru palar kūṛa

[‘as many people stated: “The boy moved away, his weapons destroyed” ’]

The fourth meaningful unit is a conditional clause: **maṇṭu amarkku uṭaintaṇaṇ āyiṇ** ‘if he broke down in response to the rushing army’



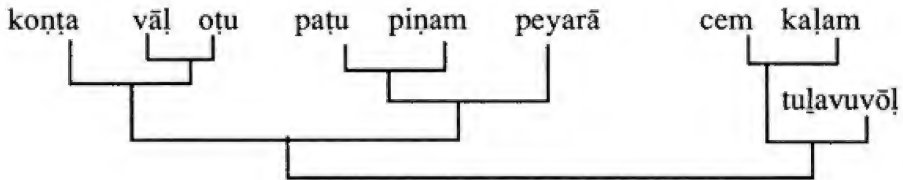
The fifth meaningful unit is an adverbial participle clause embedding a finite sentence: **uṇṭa eṇ mulai aruttu iṭuven yān eṇa ciṇaii** ‘getting angry thinking “I shall cut off and throw down my breasts which he sucked.” ’



[‘getting angry thinking “I shall cut off and throw down my breasts which he sucked” ’]

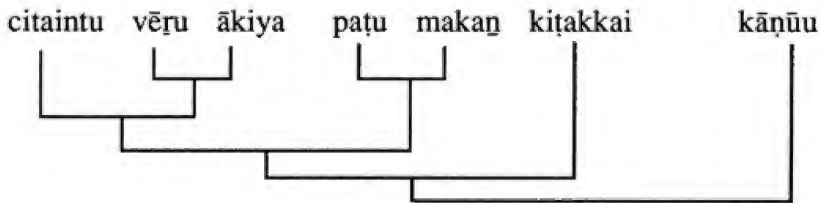
The subject of **uṇṭa** is the same as the subject of **uṭaintaṇaṇ**, which is **ciṇuvaṇ** ‘the boy.’

The sixth meaningful unit ends with a participial noun embedding an infinitive clause: **koṇṭa vāloṭu paṭu piṇam peyarā cem kaḷam tuḷavuvōl** ‘she who stirs up the red field removing the corpses, which were lying around, with the sword she took’



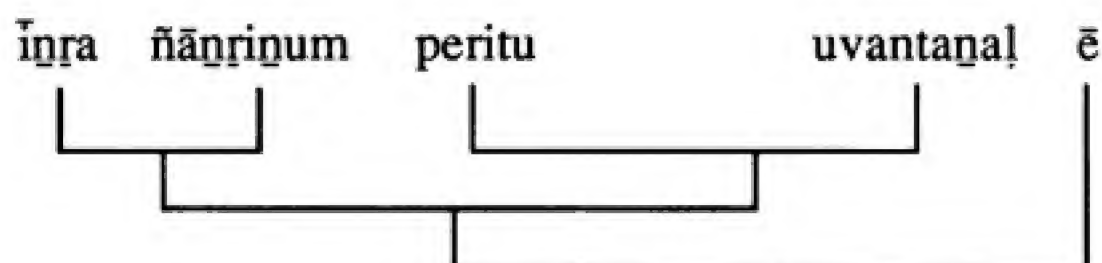
[‘she who stirs up the red field moving the corpses lying around with the sword she took’]

The seventh meaningful unit is an infinitive clause: **citaintu vēru ākiya paṭu maṇṇ kiṭakkai kāṇū** ‘looking at the state of her lying son, deformed and different.’ This clause contains a large noun phrase **citaintu vēru ākiya paṭu maṇṇ kiṭakkai** ‘the lying state of the son who is deformed and has become different (dead).’ The head noun **kiṭakkai** in this phrase is the object of the participle **kāṇū**.



[‘looking at the state of her lying son, deformed and different’]

The last meaningful unit is a finite sentence: **īṇra ṇāṇṇiṇum peritu uvantaṇaḷē** ‘She rejoiced, indeed, more than when she gave birth to him.’



[‘She rejoiced, indeed, more than when she gave birth to him.’]

The paraphrase:

*When many people said that the boy with his destroyed weapons
retreated (from the battlefield)*

*The old woman with emaciated waist and tender lifeless lean shoulders
showing the veins*

Got angry and thinking,

“I shall tear away my breasts which he sucked, if he

(in fact) broke down in response to the rushing army”

*With her sword, moved the corpses, and while stirring up the red
(battle)field*

Looking at the lying state of her dead son, deformed and different

Rejoiced more than she did when she gave birth to him.

An aesthetic translation¹¹:

*The old woman's shoulders
were dry, unfleshed,
with outstanding veins;
her low belly
was like a lotus pad.*

¹¹ This translation is by A.K. Ramanujan.

*When people said
her son had taken fright,
had turned his back on battle
and died,*

*she raged
and shouted,
“if he really broke down
in the thick of battle,
I’ll slash these breasts
that gave him suck,”
and went there,
sword in hand.*

*Turning over body after fallen body,
she rummaged through the blood-red field
till she found her son,
quartered, in pieces,*

*and she rejoiced
more than on the day
she gave him birth.*

akanānūru 9

The last poem taken here for analysis is a narration by a dramatic persona, the hero. The hero is returning to his woman after finishing the task he had undertaken. He is rushing through the forest hastening the fast horses of his chariot. But his heart, faster than himself, desiring the soft shoulders of his woman has already left him. He wonders whether the

heart reached his woman who is waiting for him and has already found its joy as she caressed it. These thoughts formulate the hero's narration.

The poem is full of suspense and is very complex in structure. It is composed of just one sentence, the subject of which appears only as the very last word. Numerous nominal phrases and verb clauses are embedded in this sentence, and each of these phrases and clauses contains several smaller phrases and clauses. It is the stack of phrases that makes the poem structurally complex. The poem (*akanāṇṇūru* 9) as it appears in printed texts:

kolviṇaip polinta kūrikuṟum puḷukin

கொல்வினைப் பொலிந்த கூர்ங்குறும் புழுகின்

villōr tūṇi vīṅkap peyta

வில்லோர் துணி வீங்கப் பெய்த

appunūnai ēyppa arumpiya iruppaic

அப்புதுனை ஏய்ப்ப அரும்பிய இருப்பைச்

ceppaṭar aṇṇa ceṅkuḷai akantō

செப்படர் அன்ன செங்குழை அகந்தோ

ṛiḷutiṇ aṇṇa tīmpuḷal tuyvāy

றிழுதின் அன்ன தீம்புழல் துய்வாய்

uḷutukāṇ tuḷaiya vāki ārkalaḷ

உழுதுகாண் துளைய வாகி ஆர்கழல்

pāli vāṇiṛ kāloṭu pārit

பாலி வானிற் காலொடு பாறித்

tuppiṇ aṇṇa ceṅkōṭṭ iyaviṇ

துப்பின் அன்ன செங்கோட் டியவின்

neyttōr mīmīcai niṇattir parikkum

நெய்த்தோர் மீமிசை நிணத்திற் பரிக்கும்

atta naṇṇiya aṅkuṭic ciṟurk

அத்த நண்ணிய அங்குடிச் சீறார்க்

koṭunun ōti makaḷir ōkkiya

கொடுநுண் ஓதி மகளிர் ஓக்கிய

toṭimāṇ ulakkait tūṇṭuraṇ pāṇi

தொடிமாண் உலக்கைத் தூண்டுறற் பாணி

neṭumāl varaiya kuṭiṇaiyō ṭiraṭṭun

நெடுமால் வரைய குடிகையோ டிரட்டுங்

kuṇṇrupiṇ oḷiyap pōki uranturantu

குன்றுபின் ஒழியப் போகி உரந்துரந்து

ṇāyīru paṭiṇum ūrcēytt eṇātu

ஞாயிறு படினும் ஊர்சேய்த் தெனாது

tunai pari turakkum tuṇcāc celaviṇ

துணைபரி துரக்கும் தஞ்சாச் செலவின்

emmiṇum viraintuval leytip paṇṇmāṇ

எம்மினும் விரைந்துவல் லெய்திப் பன்மாண்

ōṇkiya nallil oruciṇai nilaiip

ஓங்கிய நல்லில் ஒருசிறை நிலைஇப்

pāṇkarp palli paṭutorum paravik

பாங்கர்ப் பல்லி படுதொறும் பரவிக்

kaṇṇrupuku mālai niṇṇōḷ eytik

கன்றுபுகு மாலை நின்றோள் எய்திக்

kaikaviyāc ceṇru kaṇputaiyāk kuṇṇkip

கைகவியாச் சென்று கண்புதையாக் குறுகிப்

piṭikkai aṇṇa piṇṇakam tīṇṭit

பிடிக்கை அன்ன பின்னகம் தீண்டித்

toṭikkai taivarat tōyntaṇru kollō

தொடிக்கை தைவரத் தோய்ந்தன்று கொல்லோ

nāṇoṭu miṭainta karpiṇ vāṇutal

நாணெடு மிடைந்த கற்பின் வாணுதல்

antīṇ kiḷavik kuṇṇmakal

அந்தீங் கிளவிக் குறுமகள்

menrōl peranacaiic cenraven neñcē

மென்றோள் பெறநகைஇச் சென்றவென் நெஞ்சே

The paraphrase:

I wonder whether

my heart which left me

desiring the soft shoulders

of the young woman with bright forehead,

sweet words, and bashfulness blended with profundity

leaving the hills (behind)

where the rhythmic beat

from the mortar pounded with ornamental pestles

raised by women with thin curly hair

alternates with the owls

in the tall dark mountain

in the small town with nice residences

that is close to the forest

where in the elevated path, red like coral

the soft ends of the stamens, sweet as butter

scratched all inside the red copper-like shoots

of the *iruppai* (tree)

which has put out buds resembling the tips

of shining arrows that are tightly
packed

in the quivers by bowmen for the
task of killing

developed holes that one can see, and

loosening from their calyx

are scattered by the wind resembling a sky with
 hail
urged by strength, and
without thinking that the (woman's) town is far away
moving faster than me who hasten the rushing horses
reaching quickly, and
staying on one side of the tall good house, perfect in many aspects
reaching her who, in the evening when calves return home,
 is waiting and praying everytime the lizard in the vicinity calls
going with cupped fingers
getting close and covering (her) eyes
touching (her) back (which is soft) like the trunk of a female
 elephant
immersed (in her) as (her) hands wearing bracelets caressed (it)?

One can think of this poem as consisting of the following 20 or so meaningful units. The breakpoints are given in bold type.

1. kol viṇai p polinta kūṛṇ kuṛum puḷukiṇ villōṛ tūṇi vīṇka p peyta
 appu nuṇai
 ēyppa arumpiya **iruppai** c
 ceppu aṭar aṇṇa ceṇkuḷai akam tōṛu
 iḷutiṇ aṇṇa tīm puḷal tuy vāy uḷutu
 ['The **soft ends of the stamens**, sweet as butter, **scratched**
 all **inside** the red copper-like **shoots** of the *iruppai* (tree)
 which has put out buds resembling the tips of shining arrows
 that are tightly packed in the quivers by bowmen for the task
 of killing, and ...']
2. kāṇ tuḷaiya āki ['**developed holes** that one can see, and ...']
3. āṛ kaḷalpu ['**loosening** from their calyx, and ...']

4. āli vānil kāloṭu **pāri**
[‘are **scattered** by the wind resembling a sky with hail, and ...’]
5. tuppīṇ aṇṇa ceṇkōṭṭu **iyaviṇ**
[‘in the elevated **path**, red like coral’]
6. neyttōr mīmīcai niṇattir **parikkum**
[‘**spread** like fat over thick blood’]
attam [‘the **forest** (where)’]
naṇṇiya am kuṭi c **cīrur** k
[‘in the **small** nearby **town** with nice residences’]
7. koṭu nuṇ ṭi makalir ṭkkiya toṭi māṇ ulakkai t tūṇṭu ural **pāṇi**
[‘the **rhythmic beat** from the mortar(s) pounded with ornamental pestles raised by women with thin curly hair’]
8. neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiṇaiyōṭu irattum **kuṇru**
[‘**hills** where it (the rhythmic beat of the pestles) alternates with the owls in the tall dark mountain’]
9. piṇ oḷiya p **pōki** [‘**leaving** (the hills) behind’]
10. uram **turantu** [‘**urged** by strength’]
11. nāyiṇu paṭiṇum ūr cēyttu **eṇātu**
[‘and **without thinking** that the (woman’s) town is far away’]
12. tuṇai pari turakkum tuṇcā c celaviṇ emmiṇum **viraintu**
[‘and **moving faster** than us/me who hasten the rushing horses’]
13. val **eyti** [‘**reaching** quickly’]
14. paṇ māṇ ṭṇkiya nal il oru ciṇai **nilaii**
[‘**staying** on one side of the tall good house, perfect in many aspects’]
15. pāṇkar p palli paṭu toṇum paravi k kaṇru puku mālai niṇṇōḷ **eyti**
[‘**reaching** her who, in the evening when calves return home,

is waiting and praying everytime the lizard in the vicinity calls']

16. kai kaviyā c **cenru** ['going with cupped fingers']

17. kaṇ putaiyā k **kuṛuki** ['getting close and covering (her) eyes']

18. piṭi k kai aṇṇa piṇ akam **tīṇṭi**

['touching (her) inner back (which is soft) like the trunk of a female elephant']

19. toṭi k kai taivara t **tōyntanru kollō**

['(I) wonder whether it immersed (in her) as (her) hands wearing bracelets caressed (it)']

20. nāṇoṭu miṭainta kaṇpiṇ vāḷ nutal am tīṇ kiḷavi k kuṛu makaḷ **men tōḷ** peṛa **nacaii** c **cenra eṇ neñcē**

['my heart which left me desiring the soft shoulders of the young woman with bright forehead, sweet words, and bashfulness blended with profundity/maturity']

Actually, it would be easier to start with the latter part of unit numbered 19 above:

I wonder whether (part of unit 19)

my heart which left me (part of unit 20)

desiring the soft shoulders of the young woman with bright forehead, sweet words, and bashfulness blended with profundity (part of unit 20)

leaving the hills (unit 9)

where the rhythmic beat from the mortar(s) pounded with ornamental pestles

raised by women with thin curly hair (unit 7)

alternates with the owls in the tall dark mountain (unit 8)

in the small town with nice residences (unit 6)

that is close to the forest (unit 6)
 where in the elevated path, red like coral (unit 5)
 the soft ends of the stamens, sweet as butter,
 scratched all inside the red copper-like shoots of the
iruppai tree
 which has put out buds resembling the tips of
 shining arrows
 that are tightly packed in the quivers
 by bowmen for the task of killing (unit 1)
 developed holes that one can see, and (unit 2)
 loosening from their calyx (unit 3)
 are scattered by the wind resembling a sky with hail (unit 4)
 urged by strength, and (unit 10)
 without thinking that the (woman's) town is far away (unit 11)
 moving faster than me who hastens the rushing horses (unit 12)
 reaching quickly, and (unit 13)
 staying on one side of the tall good house, perfect in many aspects
 (unit 14)
 reaching her who, in the evening when calves return home,
 is waiting and praying everytime the lizard in the vicinity calls
 (unit 15)
 going with cupped fingers (unit 16)
 getting close and covering (her) eyes (unit 17)
 touching (her) back (which is soft) like the trunk of a female elephant
 (unit 18)
 immersed (in her) as (her) hands wearing bracelets caressed (it)
 (part of unit 19)

The following breakpoints can be identified in this poem: *iruppai*, *kuḷai*
akam tōru, *tuy vāy*, *uḷutu*, *tuḷaiya āki*, *kaḷalpu*, *pāri*, *iyaviṇ*, *parikkum*,

attam, cīrūr, pāṇi, kunru, pōki, turantu, enātu, viraintu, eyti, nilaii, eyti, cenru, kuruki, tīṇṭi, tōyntanru kollō, men tōl, nacaii, and neñcē.

The poem opens with a description of arrows. The first significantly meaningful unit (**kol viṇai ... uḷutu**) consists of the breakpoints **iruppai, kuḷai akam tōru, tuy vāy, and uḷutu**. This unit can be divided into several sub-units:

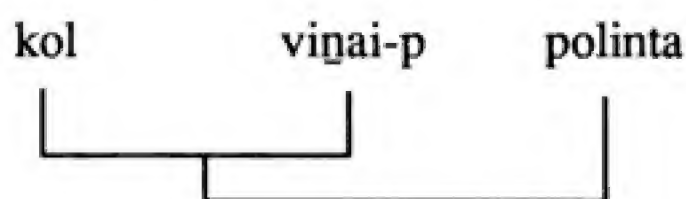
- i) kol viṇai p polinta kūm kuṛum puḷukiṇ villōr tūṇi vīṅka p peyta appu nuṇai ēyppa arumpiya **iruppai c**
- ii) ceppu aṭar aṇṇa ceṅkuḷai **akam tōru**
- iii) iḷutiṇ aṇṇa tīm puḷal **tuy vāy uḷutu**

The first of these sub-units can be further divided into the following parts, all of which modify the noun **appu**:

- (A) kol viṇai p polinta
- (B) kūm kuṛum puḷukiṇ
- (C) villōr tūṇi vīṅka p peyta

The part marked “(A)” is of this structure:

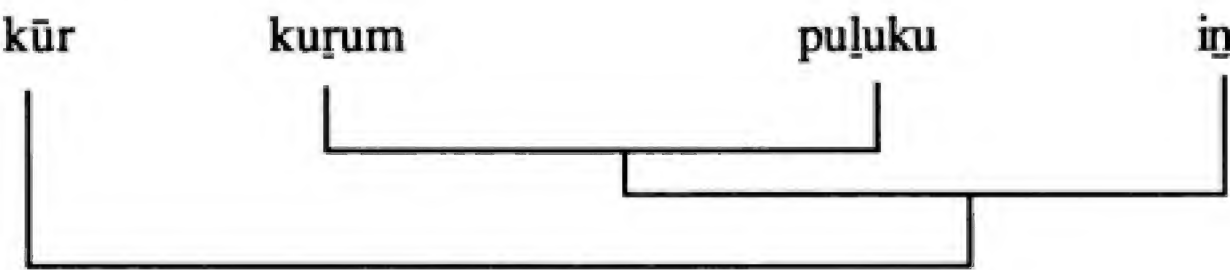
verb stem (**kol**) - noun (**viṇai**) - past adjp (**polinta**)



The verb stem **kol** ‘to kill’ and the noun **viṇai** ‘task’ result in the compound **kol viṇai** ‘the task of killing.’ The consonant **p** resulting from the doubling of the initial consonant of **polinta** ‘shining’ suggests a case relation between

polinta and the preceding word **vinai**. By convention, the case relation in this context is understood to be dative. Therefore, **kol vinai p polinta** joined with the head noun **appu** means ‘arrows shining for the act of killing.’ The part marked “(B)” has this structure:

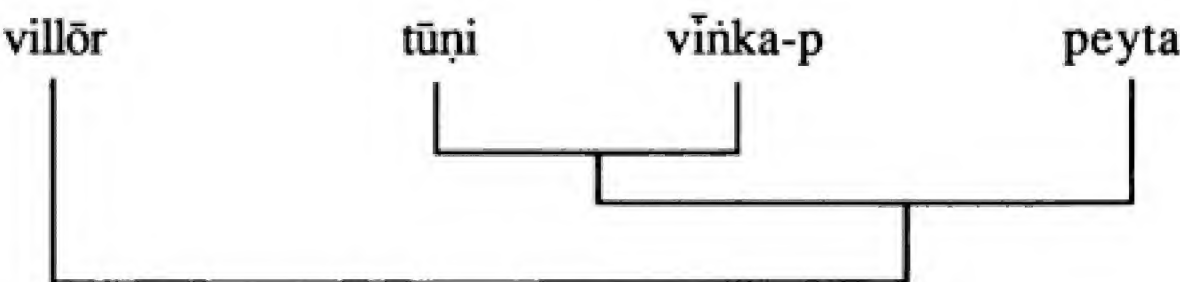
verb stem (**kūr**) - adjective (**kuṛum**) - noun (**puḷuku**) - case marker (**in**)



The juxtaposition of **kūr** ‘sharp’, **kuṛum** ‘small/little’, and **puḷuku** ‘arrow heads’ produces the compound **kūrñ kuṛum puḷuku** ‘sharp little arrow heads’, whereas the genitive case marker **in** awaits the conjoining of the head noun **appu**. Taken together, **kūrñ kuṛum puḷukin appu** means ‘arrows which have sharp and little (arrow) heads.’

The part marked “(C)” has this structure:

adjectival noun (**villōr**)-noun (**tūṇi**)-infinitive (**vīṅka**)-past adjp (**peyta**)



The adjectival noun **villōr** ‘bowmen’ is the subject of the adjectival participle **peyta** (< **pey** ‘to pour, place’), while the noun **tūṇi** ‘quiver’ is the subject of the infinitive **vīṅka** (< **vīṅku** ‘to swell’). Also **vīṅka** modifies

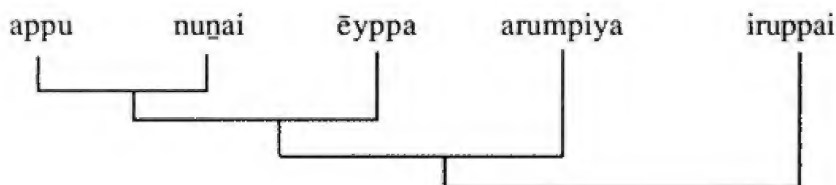
peyta like an adverb. The phrase **villōr tūṇi vīṅka p peyta** has a larger adjectival clause **villōr ... peyta** which contains an infinitive clause **tūṇi vīṅka**. Taken together with the head noun **appu**, the phrase **villōr tūṇi vīṅka p peyta appu** means 'arrows which bowmen placed (and as a result of which) the quivers swelled up.'

The larger phrase **kol vinai p polinta kūrṇ kuṛum pulukiṇ villōr tūṇi vīṅka p peyta appu** consisting of the three parts (A), (B), and (C) means:

'Arrows shining for the task of killing
(arrows) with sharp little arrow heads
(arrows) which bowmen placed making the quivers swell up'

The opening description of arrows (mis)leads one into thinking that it is a war poem. The suspense continues and will until the later part the poem.

The next sub-unit starts with a noun (**nunai** 'tips') which bears a genitive case relation with the head noun **appu** discussed above, and develops into a noun phrase containing an infinitive (**ēyppa** < **ēy** 'to resemble'), a past adjectival participle (**arumpiya** < **arumpu** 'to bud'), and a noun (**iruppai** 'iruppai tree[s]').

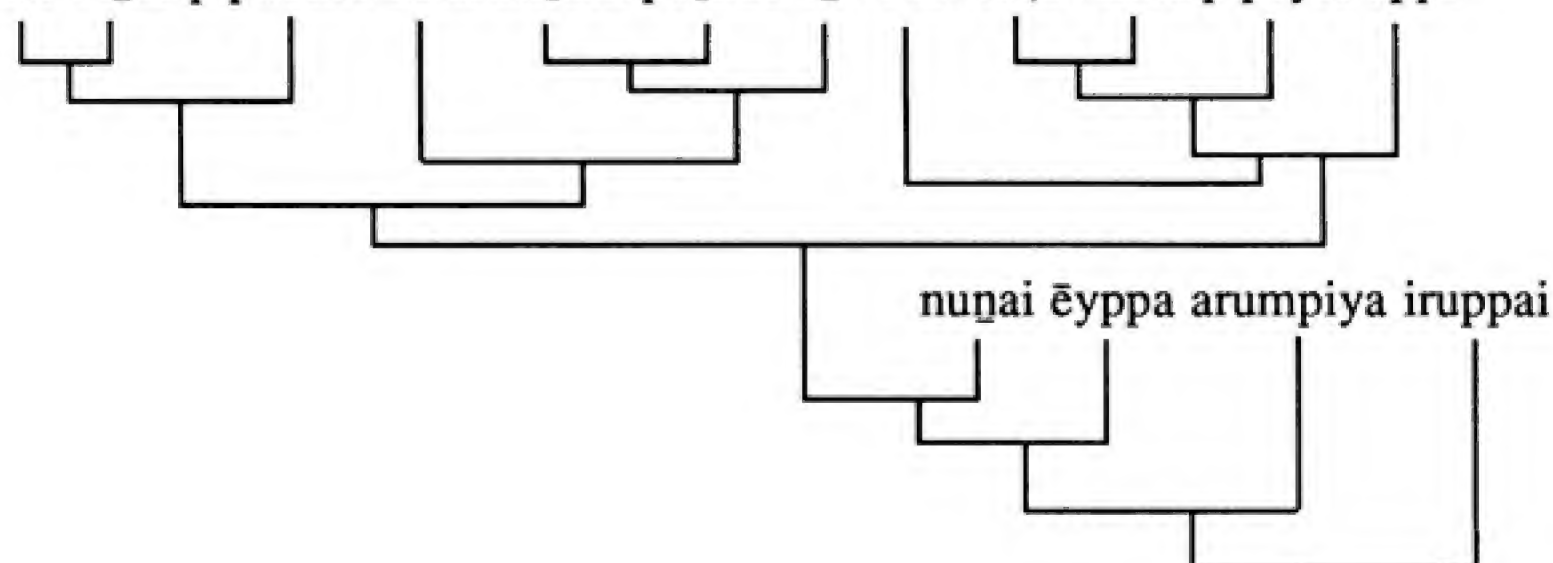


Note that **iruppai** is the breakpoint which ends this sub-unit. The phrase **nunai ēyppa arumpiya iruppai** means 'iruppai trees which have budded like the tips ...', an incomplete sense. When the genitive case relation

between **appu** and **nunai** is considered, the meaning of **appu nunai ēyppa arumpiya iruppai** is complete: 'iruppai trees, budded like the tips of arrows.'

At this point, the earlier information about the arrows has to be brought into the picture, so the two sub-units **kol viṇai p polinta kūṛṇ kuṛum pulukin villōr tūṇi vīṇka p peyta appu** and **nunai ēyppa arumpiya iruppai** can be put together: iruppai trees in which buds like the sharp little tips of arrows, which bowmen pack (their) quivers with, have emerged'

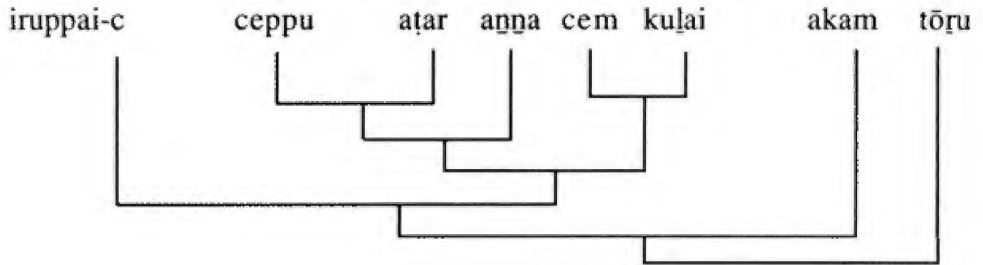
kol viṇai-p polinta kūṛṇ kuṛum puluku-iṇ villōr tūṇi vīṇka p peyta appu



nunai ēyppa arumpiya iruppai

Note that the breakpoint **iruppai** bears a semantic relation to the next breakpoint **akam tōru**. The description of arrows is now developing into a description of a specific kind of tree.

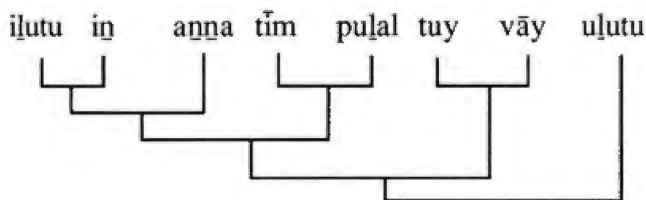
The next sub-unit begins with a compound **ceppu aṭar** 'copper sheets' and proceeds to develop into a postpositional phrase consisting of a particle (**anna** 'like'), a compound (**ceṇkuḷai** 'red leaves'), a nominal (**akam** 'inside, within'), and a postposition (**tōru** 'everywhere, all over'). This sub-unit ends with the breakpoint **akam tōru** which is linked semantically to the preceding word **ceṇkuḷai** (which in turn is linked to the previous breakpoint **iruppai**) and the next breakpoint **ulutu**.



‘everywhere inside the **iruppai**’s red leaves which are like copper sheets’

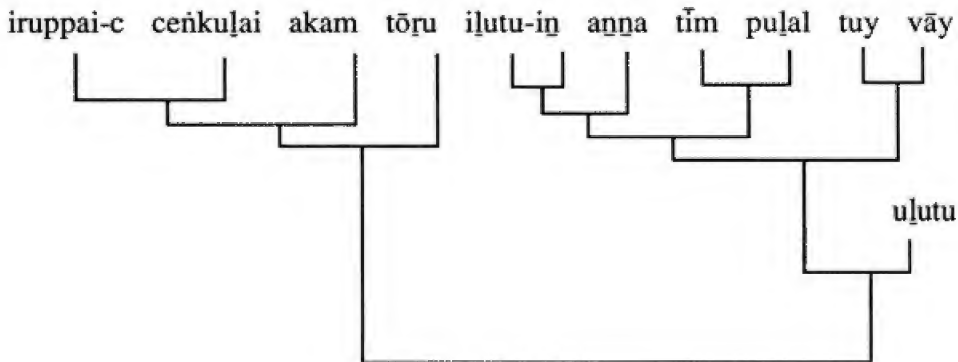
In this sub-unit, the particle of comparison **anna** connects the two compounds **ceppu aṭar** and **ceṅkuḷai**. As a result, a noun phrase emerges: **ceppu aṭar anna ceṅkuḷai** ‘red leaves like copper sheets.’ This noun phrase when taken together with the postpositional phrase **akam tōru** ‘everywhere inside, within’ means ‘everywhere inside the red leaves which are like copper sheets.’ The semantic link between the two breakpoints **iruppai** and **akam tōru** adds another dimension to the description the poem has been engaged in so far.

One has to wait for an interpretation of the next sub-unit to find out what happens to the red leaves of the **iruppai** trees. The next sub-unit **iḷutin anna tīm puḷal tuy vāy uḷutu** is a verb clause ending with the breakpoint **uḷutu**.

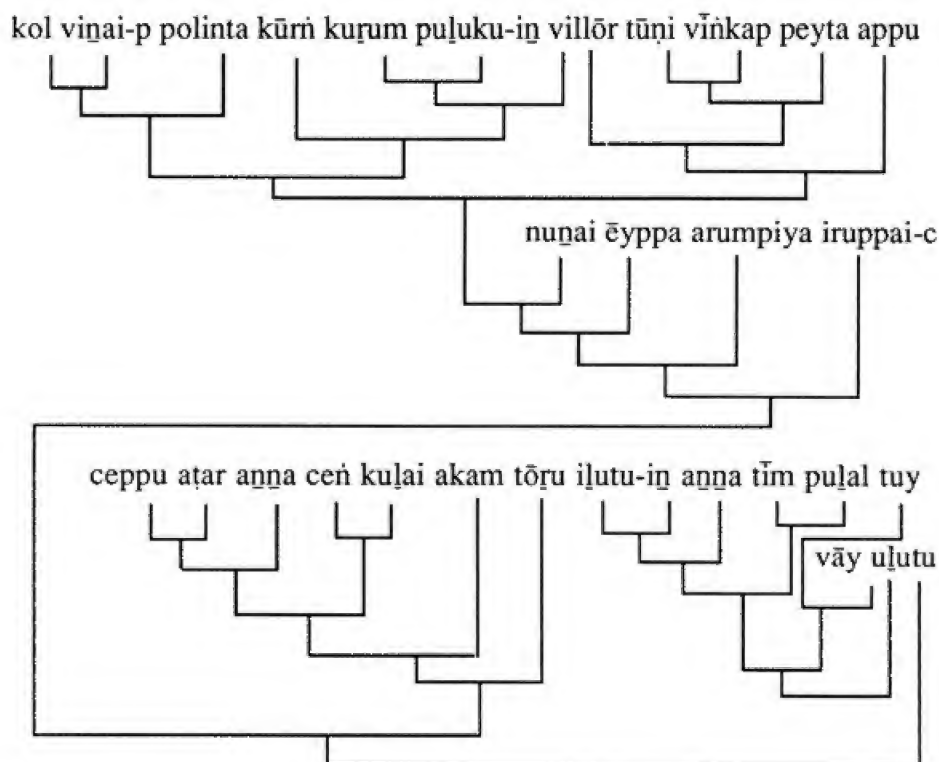


This unit begins with a noun (**ilutu** 'ghee; butter') which is followed by an oblique/case marker (**in**), a particle of comparison (**anna** 'like'), two compounds (**tīm puḷal** 'sweet hollow tube; stamen'; **tuy vāy** 'soft tips'), and an adverbial participle (**uḷutu** < **uḷu** 'to scratch'). While the particle of comparison **anna** connects the two items (**ilutin** and **tīm**) on its either side, the adjective **tīm** modifies **puḷal** which in turn holds an unmarked case relation with the compound (**tuy vāy**) next to it. Thus, **ilutin anna tīm puḷal tuy vāy** turns into a noun phrase meaning 'hollow stamens with soft tips, sweet like butter.' This noun phrase is the subject of the adverbial participle **uḷutu**. Therefore, **ilutin anna tīm puḷal tuy vāy uḷutu** means 'hollow stamens with soft ends, sweet like butter, scratched and ...', again an incomplete sense.

Where do these stamens scratch? The previous breakpoint **ceṅkuḷai akam tōru** and the breakpoint **uḷutu** in the present sub-unit should be connected to know that the stamens scratched inside the leaves of the **iruppai** trees. **iruppai c ceṅkuḷai akam tōru ilutin anna tīm puḷal tuy vāy uḷutu** 'the stamens scratched all inside the **iruppai**'s red leaves which are like copper sheets.'



Thus, the very first meaningful unit starting with **kol viṇai** and ending with **uḷutu** provides a description of the **iruppai**'s leaves and stamens. In particular, it focuses on what the stamens do.



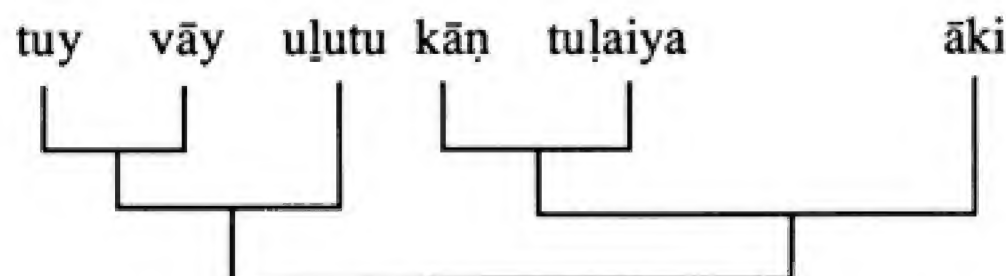
Now, the breakpoint **uḷutu** is semantically linked to the next breakpoint **āki** in the next meaningful unit **kāṇ tuḷaiya āki**.

Actually, next two meaningful units (**kāṇ tuḷaiya āki** and **ār kaḷalpu**) tell the reader what happens to the stamens. The first of them (**kāṇ tuḷaiya āki**) is a verb clause beginning with a verb stem (**kāṇ** 'to see'),

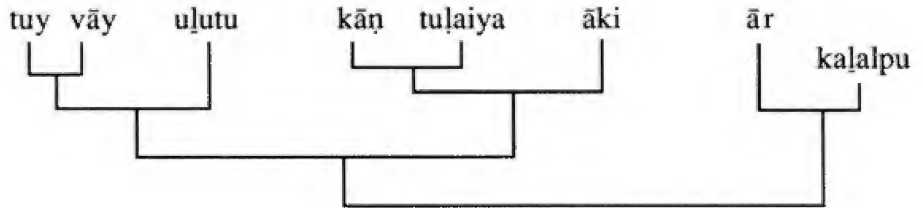
followed by an adjectival noun (**tuḷaiya** < **tuḷai** 'holes'), and an adverbial participle (**āki** < **āku** 'to become') which is the breakpoint here.



The subject (**tuy vāy**) of this clause (**kāṇ tuḷaiya āki**) is the same as that for the previous clause (**iruppai ... uḷutu**). The phrase **kāṇ tuḷaiya āki** can be interpreted to mean 'turned into X with visible holes.' When taken together with its subject, the clause **tuy vāy ... kāṇ tuḷaiya āki** means 'stamens with soft tips developed visible holes ..., and ...'



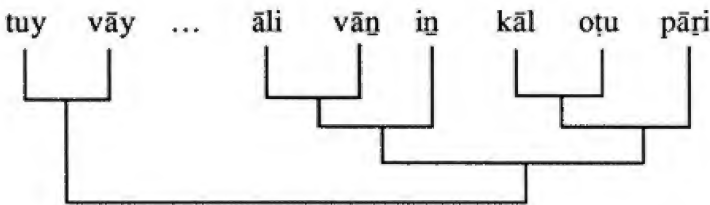
The next unit **ār kaḷalpu** has a noun (**ār** 'calyx'), and an infinitive (**kaḷalpu** < **kaḷal** 'to loosen') which is a breakpoint. The subject is **tuy vāy**. Therefore, **tuy vāy ... ār kaḷalpu** means 'stamens with soft tips loosened from their calyx.' Now one can arrange the subject **tuy vāy** with its successive adverbial participles **uḷutu**, **āki**, and **ār kaḷalpu**.



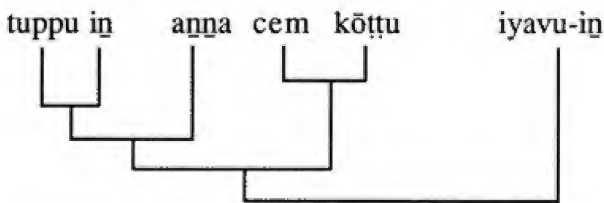
At this point, the poem seems to take a turn from the description of arrows it started with to that of some stamens. Next three meaningful units inform the reader what the stamens do next. The first of them (**āli vāṇil kāloṭu pāri**) is a verb clause comprised of two smaller phrases (**āli vāṇ** and **kāloṭu pāri**).



The whole verb clause contains the nouns **āli** ‘hail’, **vāṇ** ‘sky’, and **kāl** ‘wind.’ It has the case markers **in** and **oṭu**. The adverbial participle (**pāri** < **pāru** ‘to scatter’) here is a breakpoint. **āli vāṇ** means ‘sky with hail’ and **kāloṭu pāri** means ‘scattered by the wind.’ The marker **in** provides a comparative sense ‘like’ and connects **āli vāṇ** and **kāloṭu pāri**: **āli vāṇin kāloṭu pāri** ‘scattered by the wind resembling a sky with hail, and’ The subject **tuy vāy** helps to develop the meaning ‘the stamens ... were scattered by the wind resembling a sky with hail.’

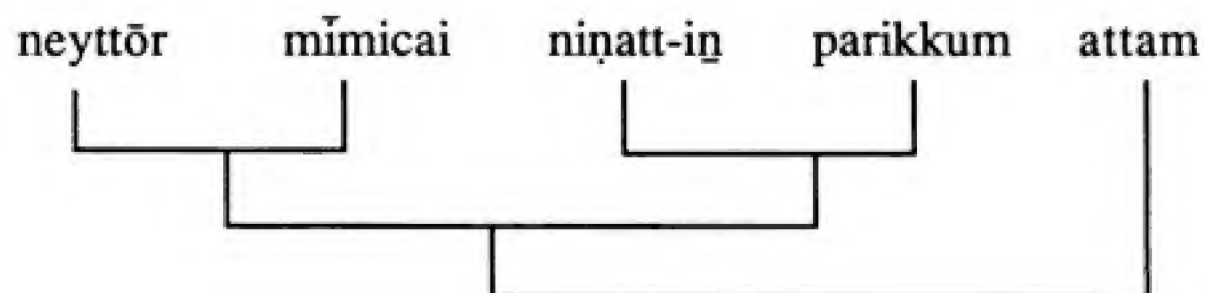


The next meaningful unit **tuppin anna ceṅkōṭṭu iyavin** is a noun phrase beginning with **tuppu** ‘coral’ and ending with the breakpoint **iyavin**. It contains three nouns (**tuppu** ‘coral’, **kōṭu** ‘elevation’, and **iyavu** ‘path’). The case marker in the phrase is **in**. In addition, there is a comparative particle (**anna**) and an adjective (**cem** ‘red’). The noun **kōṭu** appears in its oblique form (**kōṭṭu**). While **anna** connects **tuppin** and **cem kōṭṭu**, the latter forms a noun phrase with the next word **iyavu**. Therefore, **tuppin anna cem kōṭṭu iyavu** means ‘the red elevated path, like coral.’ The case marker **in** appended to **iyavu** gives a locative sense: **tuppin anna cem kōṭṭu iyavin** ‘in the elevated path, red like coral.’



One does not know what happens in this red elevated path until one interprets the next unit (**neyttōr mīmīcai niṇattir parikkum**) together with the preceding meaningful units. The noun phrase **neyttōr mīmīcai niṇattir parikkum** contains the nouns **neyttōr** ‘thick blood’ and **niṇam** ‘fat.’ The noun **niṇam** appears in its oblique form **niṇatt** and is followed by the case marker **in** ‘like.’ In this unit, there is also a postposition (**mīmīcai** ‘upon, over’) and a non-past adjectival participle (**parikkum** <

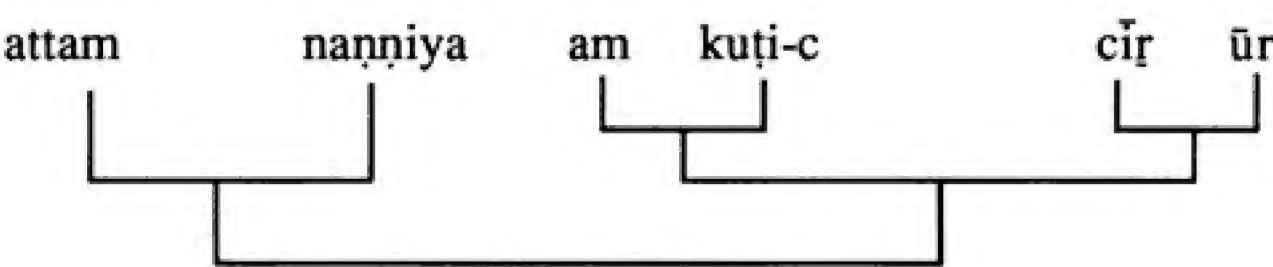
pari ‘to spread’). Here, **neyttōr mīmīcai** forms a postpositional phrase meaning ‘over blood’, whereas **niṇattir parikkum** ‘spreads like fat’ explains what happens over the blood. The subject of the adjectival participle **parikkum** is **tuy vāy**, the soft ends which are described in the earlier part of the poem. The word **attam** which follows **parikkum** completes the sense of the adjectival participle **parikkum**, so one understands that the soft ends of the stamens described above are scattered on the red elevated path in the forest: **tuy vāy ... ār kaḷalpu kāloṭu pāri neyttōr mīmīcai niṇattir parikkum attam** ‘the forest where the soft ends of the stamens, scattered by the wind, spread on the elevated coral-like red path resembling fat over blood.’



To recapitulate, one can think of the units considered so far as constituting a large noun phrase beginning with **kol vinai** and ending with **attam**. It is worth noting that **attam** is not the subject of the main sentence of the poem. The poem opened as if it was describing a war, but has now turned its focus to nature. What happens in the forest is told in the next few meaningful units.

The next unit **attam naṇṇiya am kuṭi c cīrūr** is a noun phrase beginning with the noun **attam** ‘forest’ and ending with another noun **cīrūr** ‘small town.’ Here, the subject of the past adjectival participle **naṇṇiya** (< **naṇṇu** ‘to be close’) is the preceding word (**attam** ‘forest’). In this unit, **am** ‘beautiful, pleasant’ is an adjective modifying the noun **kuṭi** ‘residence’ which in turn bears a genitive case relation to **cīrūr**. The

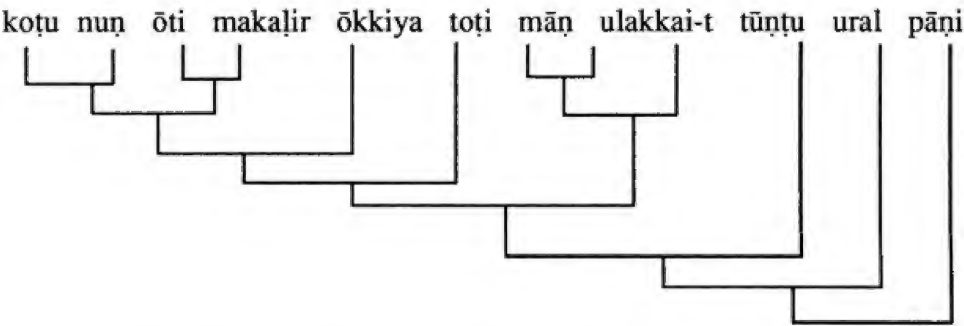
case relation is indicated by the doubling of the initial consonant in **cīrūr**. The compound **am kuṭi c cīrūr** means ‘small town with nice residences.’ The connection among **attam**, **naṇṇiya**, and **cīrūr** yields the interpretation ‘the town which is close to the forest.’¹²



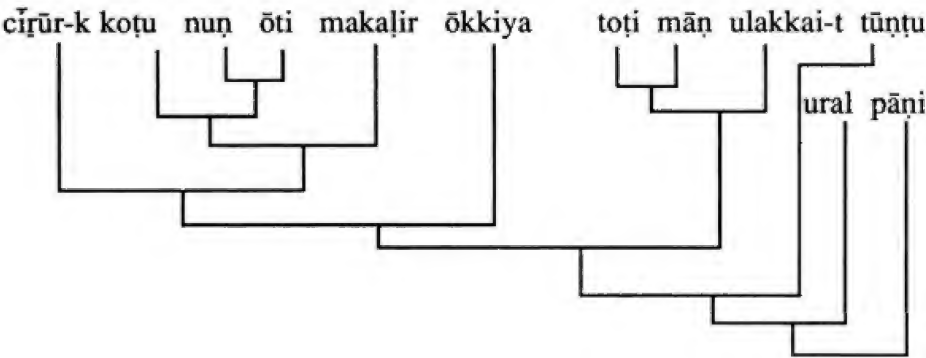
Now the poem is beginning to turn its attention to society. The relevance of the forest to the town is revealed in the next two units (**koṭu nuṇ ṓti makaḷir ṓkkiya toṭi māṇ ulakkai t tūṇṭu ural pāṇi** and **neṭu māl varaiya kutiṇaiyōṭu iraṭṭum kunru**). The first of these units is a noun phrase beginning with an adjective (**koṭu** ‘bent, curved’) and ending with a noun (**pāṇi** ‘rhythmic beat’). The adjective (**koṭu**) is followed by these items in a sequence: an adjective (**nuṇ** ‘fine, smooth’), two nouns (**ṓti** ‘hairdo’ and **makaḷir** ‘women’), a past adjectival participle (**ṓkkiya** < **ṓkku** ‘raise, lift’), another noun (**toṭi** ‘bracelet, ring’), a verb stem (**māṇ** ‘to be perfect’), a noun (**ulakkai** ‘pestle’), a verb stem (**tūṇṭu** ‘to pound’), and two nouns (**ural** ‘mortar’ and **pāṇi** ‘rhythmic beat’). The larger noun phrase **koṭu nuṇ ṓti makaḷir ṓkkiya toṭi māṇ ulakkai t tūṇṭu ural pāṇi** contains three small compounds (**koṭu nuṇ ṓti makaḷir**, **toṭi māṇ ulakkai**, and **tūṇṭu ural pāṇi**). The subject of the adjectival participle **ṓkkiya** is the head noun (**makaḷir**) of the preceding compound, whereas its object (**ulakkai**) is the head noun of the following compound. The noun **ulakkai**

¹² In fact, this phrase **attam naṇṇiya ... cīrūr** is ambiguous and allows a slight change of focus in these interpretations: ‘forest which is near the small town’; ‘small town which is near the forest.’

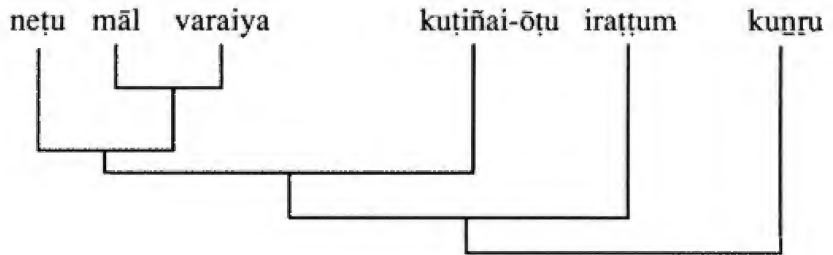
‘pestle’ is the head noun of the compound **toṭi māṇ ulakkai** and serves as the subject of the next verb **tūṇṭu** ‘to pound’ which has **ural** ‘mortar(s)’ as its object. The noun **ural** has a case relation with the noun **pāṇi** ‘rhythmic beat.’ Put together, **koṭu nuṇ ṓti makaḷir ōkkiya toṭi māṇ ulakkai t tūṇṭu ural pāṇi** can be interpreted to mean literally ‘the rhythmic beat from the mortar(s) pounded with pestles which are elegantly covered with rings and raised by women wearing fine curly hair.’ The basic idea is that women are pounding the mortar(s) with pestles and a rhythmic beat arises from the pounding.



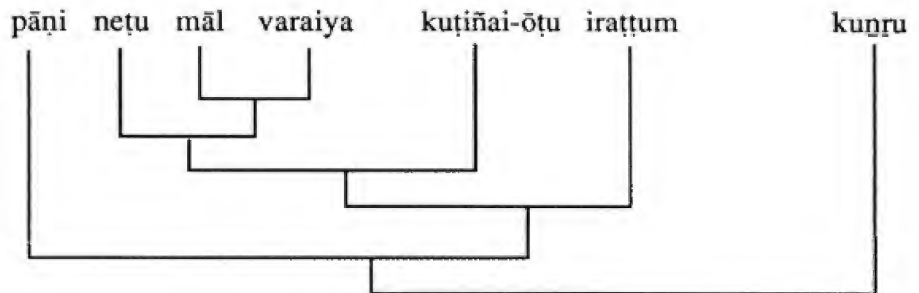
Where are these women? They are in the small town described in the phrase **am kuṭi c cīṛūr** discussed above. A locative case relation between **cīṛūr** and **koṭu nuṇ ṓti makaḷir** is indicated by the doubling of the initial consonant of **koṭu** which follows **cīṛūr**.



What does the rhythmic beat of the pestles do? The answer is given in the next unit (**neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiṇaiyōṭu iraṭṭum** ‘alternates with the owls in the tall dark mountain’). The breakpoint (**pāṇi**) in the last unit is the subject of this unit (**neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiṇaiyōṭu iraṭṭum**) which ends with an adjectival participle (**iraṭṭum**) completed by the next breakpoint (**kunru** ‘hill[s]’). The unit **neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiṇaiyōṭu iraṭṭum** is composed of two adjectives (**neṭu** ‘tall’ and **māl** ‘dark’), an adjectival noun (**varaiya** < **varai** ‘mountain’), a noun (**kuṭiṇai** ‘owls’), a case marker (**ōṭu** ‘with’), and a non-past adjectival participle (**iraṭṭum** < **iraṭṭu** ‘to alternate’). The completing nominal of the adjectival participle (**iraṭṭum**) here is **kunru**, which comes next. **neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiṇai** itself is a compound meaning ‘owls which are in the tall dark mountain.’ When the head noun of this compound (**kuṭiṇai**) is connected with **iraṭṭum kunru** by the associative case marker **ōṭu**, the noun phrase **neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiṇaiyōṭu iraṭṭum kunru** means ‘hill(s) where ... alternates with the owls in the tall dark mountain.’

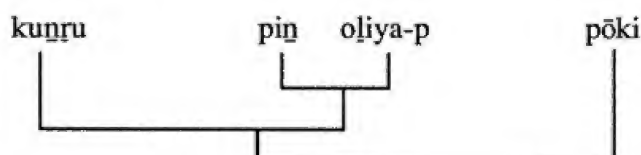


Considering the noun **pāṇi** ‘rhythmic beat’ to be the subject of the phrase **neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiñaiyōṭu iratṭum kuṇru**, the larger noun phrase **pāṇi neṭu māl varaiya kuṭiñaiyōṭu iratṭum kuṇru** gives a description of the hill(s): ‘hill(s) where the rhythmic beat alternates with the owls in the tall dark mountain.’ It was said in the units discussed above that the pestles are the source of the rhythmic beat.

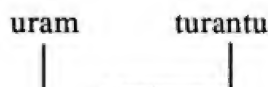


Now the poem is taking a stroll through the forest, mountains, and hills. The subject of the main sentence is not yet disclosed. The word **kuṇru** is connected to the next meaningful unit by functioning as the object of the infinitive (**oliya**) in it. The next meaningful unit **pin oliya p pōki** contains a nominal (**pin** ‘behind’), an infinitive (**oliya** < **oli** ‘to disappear from sight’), and an adverbial participle (**pōki** < **pō** ‘to go’).

The infinitive clause **pin oḷiya** and the adverbial participle **pōki** are connected in such a way that **oḷiya** could be taken to provide a resultive or purposive sense. Basically, **kunru pin oḷiya p pōki** means 'X went and the hills disappeared behind X.' The subject of the adverbial participle **pōki** is the subject of the main sentence in the poem, but will not be revealed until one reaches the very last word.

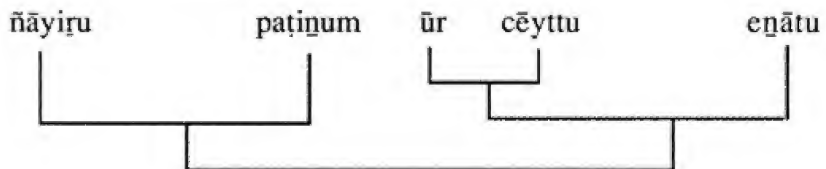


The rest of the poem consists of relatively smaller meaningful units, most of them ending with an adverbial participle, while each adverbial participle is linked semantically to the next. The next meaningful unit **uram turantu** contains a noun (**uram** 'strength') and an adverbial participle (**turantu** < **tura** 'to urge'). The phrase **uram turantu** means 'urged by strength.'



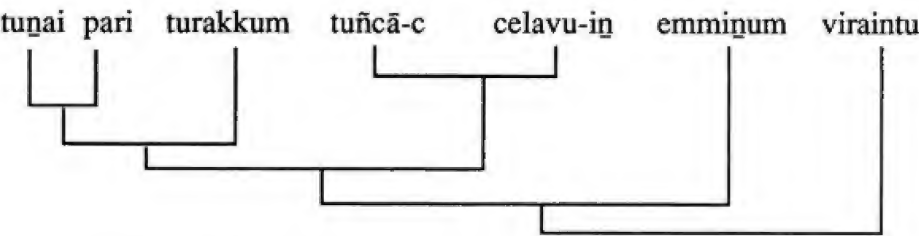
The subsequent meaningful unit **ñāyīru paṭinum ūr cēyttu enātu** is an adverbial clause and has two nouns (**ñāyīru** 'the sun' and **ūr** 'town'). It also contains a concessive of fact (**paṭinum** 'although the sun has set'), an adjectival noun (**cēyttu** 'is far away' < **cēy** 'distance'), and a negative adverbial participle (**enātu** 'without saying/thinking' < **en** 'to say'). The noun **ñāyīru** is the subject of the verb underlying the concessive of fact **paṭinum** which in turn provides a factual situation for the negative adverbial participle **enātu**. The adverbial clause **ñāyīru paṭinum ūr cēyttu enātu**

subsumes a small sentence **ūr cēyttu** ‘The town is far away’ which is followed by the adverbial participle (**eṇātu**). Thus, **ūr cēyttu eṇātu** means ‘without saying/thinking “The town is far away.”’ The whole adverbial clause (**ñāyīru paṭiṇum ūr cēyttu eṇātu**) means ‘although the sun has set, ... without thinking “The town is far away” ...’



The next meaningful unit (**tunai pari turakkum tuñcā c celavin emminum viraintu**) begins with a verb stem (**tunai** ‘to rush’), and develops into an adverbial participle clause by including a noun (**pari** ‘horse[s]’), a non-past adjectival participle (**turakkum** < **tura** ‘to hasten’), a negative adjectival participle (**tuñcā** < **tuñcu** ‘to procrastinate, delay’), a verbal noun (**celavu** < **cel** ‘to go toward a destination’), a case marker (**in**), a pronoun in comparative form (**emminum** < **em** ‘us’ + **inum**), and an adverbial participle (**viraintu** < **virai** ‘to rush’). The two words **emminum** and **viraintu** give the meaning ‘rushing faster than us/me.’ The rest of the words form a noun phrase with the pronoun **em** as the head noun. The non-past adjectival participle **turakkum** and the verbal noun **celavu** in its declined form (**celavin**) modify the head noun **em**. The object of this adjectival participle (**turakkum**) is **pari** that forms the compound **tunai pari** ‘horses which are rushing’ with the preceding verb stem **tunai**. Thus, **tunai pari turakkum** literally means ‘that which hastens the horses which are rushing.’ The negative adjectival participle **tuñcā** is the object of **celavu** (**tuñcā c celavu** ‘the undelayed journey’). Joined together with **tunai pari turakkum** on one side and **in** and **emminum** on the other,

tunai pari turakkum tuñcā c celaviṇ emminum means ‘more than I (hon.) who am on an undelayed journey hastening the rushing horses.’ The adverbial participle **viraintu** adds the sense ‘moving faster’ to ‘more than I who am on an undelayed journey, hastening the rushing horses.’ Therefore, the verb clause **tunai pari turakkum tuñcā c celaviṇ emminum viraintu** can be interpreted as ‘moving faster than me who is on an undelayed journey and hastens the rushing horses.’ The poem seems to take another turn here by introducing the narrator’s identity in the first person honorific **em**.



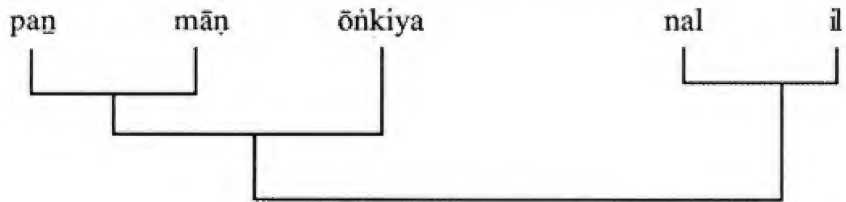
The next unit **val eyti** has an adverb (**val** ‘quickly, fast’) and an adverbial participle (**eyti** < **eytu** ‘to reach’) giving the sense ‘reaching quickly.’



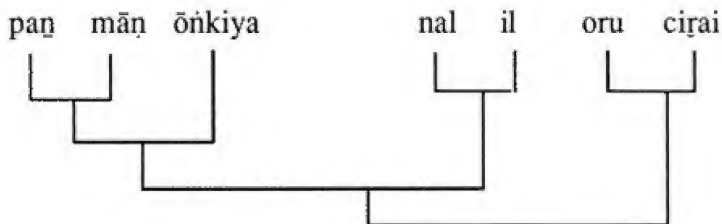
The subsequent unit is a long verb clause (**paṇ māṇ ṓṇkiya nal il oru ciṛai nilali p pāṇkar p palli paṭu toṛum paravi k kaṇru puku mālai ninrōḷ eyti**). This clause contains the following smaller parts: **paṇ māṇ ṓṇkiya nal il**, **oru ciṛai nilali**, **pāṇkar p palli paṭu toṛum paravi**, and **kaṇru puku mālai**. These smaller parts add up to form a larger noun

phrase with the head noun **ninrōl** which is the object of the next adverbial participle **eyti**.

The part **paṇ māṇ òṇkiya nal il** is itself a noun phrase and has two adjectives (**paṇ** < **pal** 'many' and **nal** 'good'). There is also a verb stem (**māṇ** 'to be perfect, elegant'), a past adjectival participle (**òṇkiya** < **òṇku** 'to be tall'), and the head noun (**il** 'house'). The adjective **paṇ** modifies **māṇ** which in turn modifies **il**. The adjective **nal** modifies **òṇkiya** and **il**. Altogether, the noun phrase **paṇ māṇ òṇkiya nal il** means 'the tall good house which is perfect/elegant in many (aspects).'

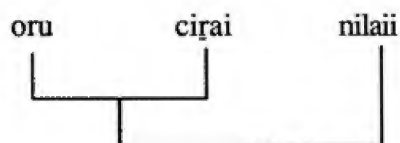


The head noun (**il**) of this phrase (**paṇ māṇ òṇkiya nal il**) bears a genitive case relation to the next phrase **oru ciṛai**, where **oru** means 'one' and **ciṛai** means 'side.' The phrases **paṇ māṇ òṇkiya nal il** and **oru ciṛai** add up to mean 'on one side of the tall good house, perfect in many (aspects).'

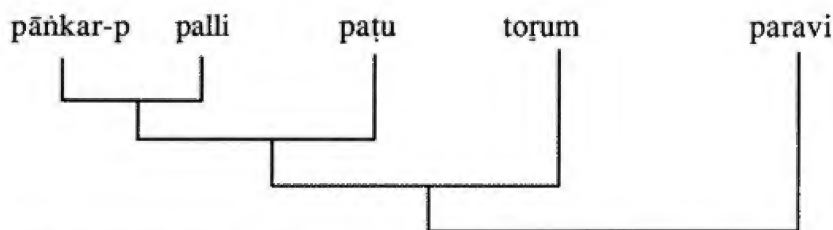


The phrase **oru ciṛai** bears a locative case relation to the following

adverbial participle (**nilaii** < **nil** 'to stand'). Therefore, **oru ciṛai nilaii** means 'standing on one side.' Note that the subject of **nilaii** is not yet mentioned.

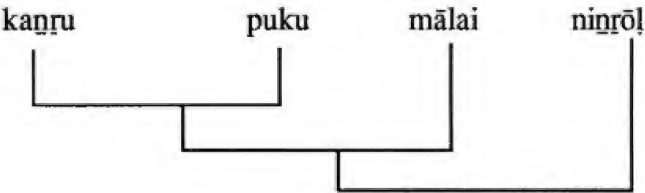


The part **pāṅkar p palli paṭu torum paravi** is a verb clause consisting of the following: two postpositions (**pāṅkar** 'side; same side' and **torum** 'every [time]'), a noun (**palli** 'gecko'), a verb stem (**paṭu** 'to sound'), and an adverbial participle (**paravi** < **para[vu]** 'to pray'). The sequence **pāṅkar p palli paṭu torum** forms a postpositional phrase holding a locative connection with the adverbial participle (**paravi**). The postpositional phrase means 'whenever the gecko in the vicinity sounds' (**pāṅkar p palli** 'the gecko on one side'; **paṭutorum** 'whenever X sounds'). The addition of **paravi** to this phrase provides 'praying whenever the gecko in the vicinity sounds.'



The subject of **paravi** is **ninrōl** 'she who stood', a past participial noun derived from **nil** 'to stand, stay.' It is found in the next part **kanru puku mālai ninrōl**. The compound **kanru puku mālai** containing the

nouns **kaṇru** ‘calves’ and **mālai** ‘evening’ and the verb stem **puku** ‘to enter’ means ‘evening when calves enter/return (home).’

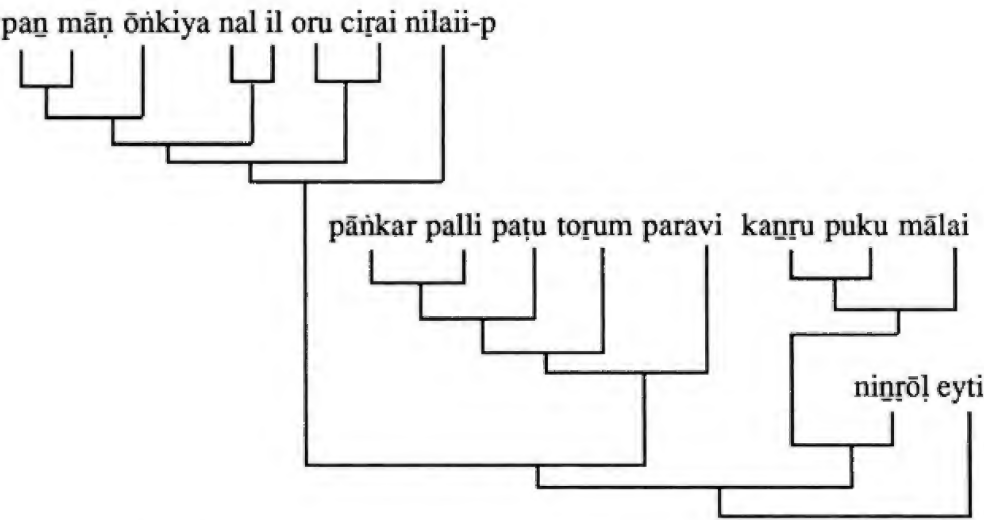


The larger noun phrase which begins with **paṇ māṇ** and ends with **ninrōḷ** informs the reader about a woman waiting for someone.

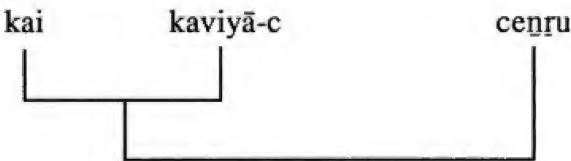


The word **ninrōḷ** is the object of the adverbial participle **eyti**. The verb clause embedding the larger noun phrase beginning with **paṇ māṇ** and ending with **ninrōḷ** is **paṇ māṇ ōṇkiya nal il oru ciṛai nilaii p pāṇkar p palli paṭu toruṁ paravi k kaṇru puku mālai ninrōḷ eyti**. It can be interpreted to mean ‘reaching her who stood on one side of the tall good manifold elegant house, praying everytime the gecko in the vicinity

sounds.’ Note that the subject of the adverbial participle **eyti** is not yet revealed.

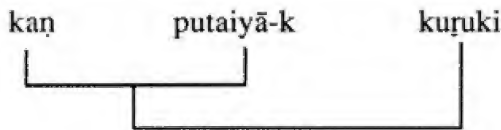


The next meaningful unit is **kai kaviyāc cenru** containing a noun (**kai** ‘hand[s]’), an infinitive (**kaviyā** < **kavi** ‘to fold’), and an adverbial participle (**cenru** < **cel** ‘to go’). It means ‘going with folded hands.’

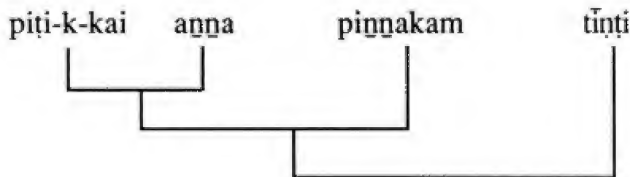


The subsequent meaningful unit **kaṇ putaiyā k kuṛuki** has a noun (**kaṇ** ‘eye[s]’), an infinitive (**putaiyā** < **putai** ‘to cover, bury’), and an adverbial participle (**kuṛuki** < **kuṛuku** ‘to get close’). The whole clause

means 'reaching closely and covering ... eyes.' Whose eyes are covered by whom? The mystery will be resolved soon.



The next meaningful unit (**piṭi k kai anna pinṇakam tīṇṭi**) contains a few nouns (**piṭi** 'female elephant', **kai** 'arm, hand, trunk of an elephant', and **pinṇakam** 'back side; inside of the back'), a particle of comparison (**anna**), and an adverbial participle (**tīṇṭi** < **tīṇṭu** 'to touch'). The whole clause means 'touching the (inner) back which is like the trunk of a female elephant.'

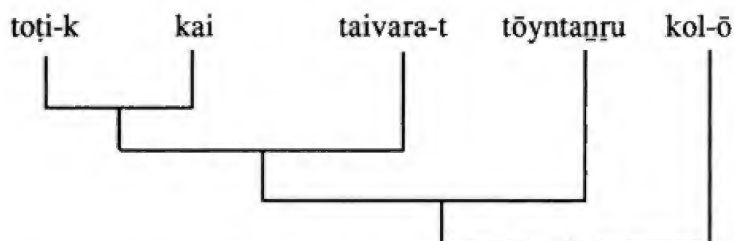


The next meaningful unit **toṭi k kai taivara t tōyntanru kollō** has a finite verb. It begins with the noun **toṭi** 'bracelet' and is followed successively by another noun (**kai** 'hand, arm'), an infinitive (**taivara** < **taivaru** 'to caress'), a finite verb (**tōyntanru** < **tōy** 'to lean, indulge in'), and a particle (**kollō**).

The major parts of this unit are **toṭi-k-kai**, **taivara**, and **tōyntanru kollō**. **toṭi-k-kai** 'hands with bracelets' is a compound consisting of two stems (**toṭi** 'bracelet' and **kai** 'hand'). The infinitive **taivara** provides the sense 'as ... caressed.' The personal verb **tōyntanru** means 'it in-

dulged/leaned', and the particle **kollō** gives the senses of wonder and rhetorical question. Thus, **tōyntanru kollō** could be taken to mean 'whether it indulged (I wonder)?'

When all the words in this unit (**toṭi k kai taivara t tōyntanru kollō**) are put together, the phrase means '(I wonder) whether it indulged as the hands wearing bracelets caressed (it)?' At this point there is an indication about the subject of the finite verb (**tōyntanru**) that it is neuter singular.



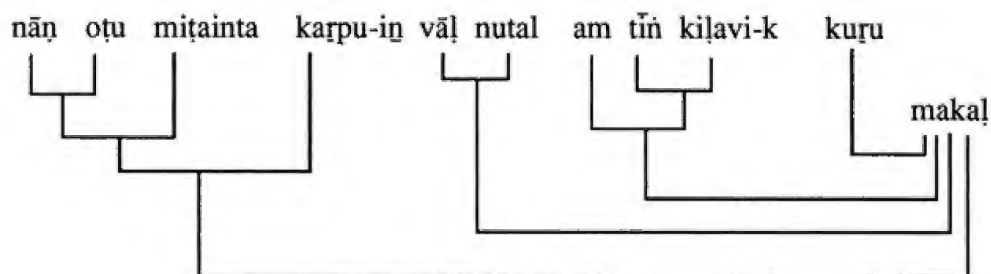
The final meaningful unit is fairly large. It is a noun phrase beginning with a declined noun (**nāṇ** 'bashfulness' + **oṭu** case marker 'with') and ending with a noun (**neñcu** 'heart') followed by a particle (**ē**). The noun **neñcu** is the subject of the main sentence in the poem. The unit **nāṇoṭu miṭainta karpiṇ vāḷ nutal am tīṇ kiḷavi k kuṟu makaḷ men tōḷ pera nacaii cenra en neñcē** is composed of the following items: the nouns **nāṇ** 'bashfulness', **karpu** 'maturity, profundity', **nutal** 'forehead', **kiḷavi** 'word(s)', **makaḷ** 'woman', **tōḷ** 'shoulder(s)', and **neñcu** 'heart'; the oblique pronoun **en** 'my' (< **yāṇ** 'I'); associative case marker **oṭu**; genitive case marker **iṇ**; the adjectives **vāḷ** 'bright', **am** 'beautiful', **tī(m)** 'sweet, pleasant', **kuṟu** 'short, small', and **men** 'soft'; past adjectival participles **miṭainta** (< **miṭai** 'to braid, blend') and **cenra** (< **cel** 'to leave for a destination'); infinitive **pera** (< **peru** 'to obtain'); adverbial participle **nacaii** (< **nacai** 'to desire'), and the particle **ē**. The infinitive **pera** provides a purposive sense completed by the adverbial participle **nacaii**.

Among these words, the noun **neñcu** is the “subject” of three items: infinitive **pera**, adverbial participle **nacaii**, and adjectival participle **cenra**. The noun phrase beginning with **nănoțu** and ending with **tōl** is the object of the infinitive (**pera**). The smaller noun phrase **nănoțu mițainta karpu**, **văl nutsal** and the compound **am tîn kîlavi** modify **kuṛu makal** which itself is a compound.

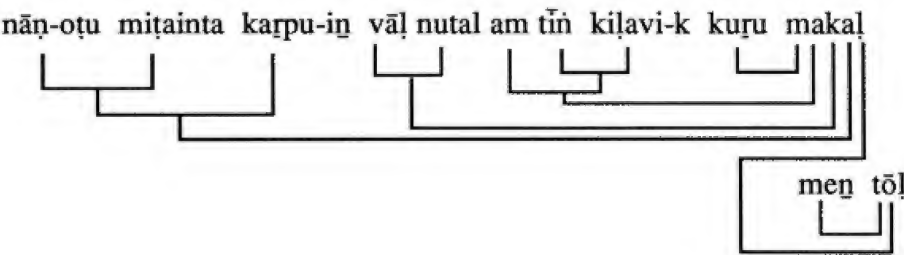
The head noun **karpu** of the phrase **nănoțu mițainta karpu** is declined for the genitive case and marked by **in**. When all the individual items here are interpreted (**năn** ‘bashfulness’, **oțu** ‘with’, **mițainta** ‘braided, blended’, **karpu** ‘profundity’), **nănoțu mițainta karpu** means ‘profundity blended with bashfulness.’



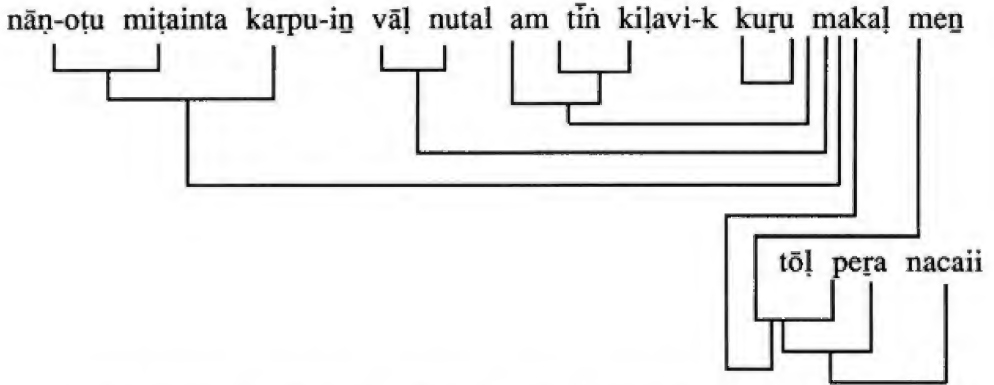
The next phrase **văl nutsal** means ‘bright forehead’, while **am tîn kîlavi** means ‘beautiful, sweet words.’ Three phrases (**nănoțu mițainta karpin**, **văl nutsal**, and **am tîn kîlavi**) modify **kuṛu makāl** ‘short/small woman’ which describes a certain woman: ‘the small woman, with profundity blended with bashfulness, bright forehead, and soft sweet words.’



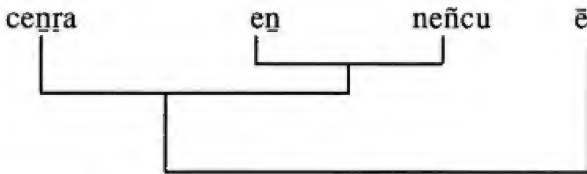
This entire phrase has a genitive relation with the following compound (**men tōl** ‘soft shoulders’). Then, starting from **nāṇ** and finishing with **tōl**, the interpretation is: ‘soft shoulders of the small/young woman with bright forehead, profundity blended with bashfulness, and soft sweet words’



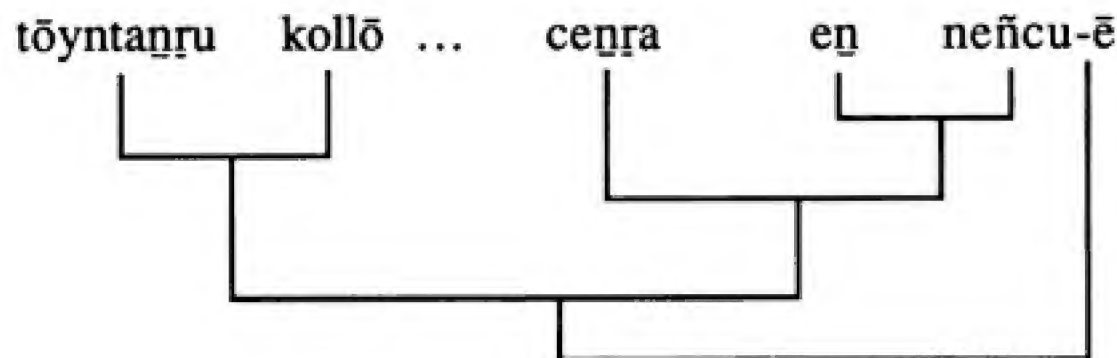
This phrase serves as the object of the infinitive **pera** ‘to obtain’ which in turn is linked to **nacaii**. The clause beginning with **nāṇ** and ending with **nacaii** therefore means ‘desiring/wanting to obtain the soft shoulders of the small woman with bright forehead, who has maturity blended with bashfulness and sweet gentle words.’



The word **cenra** in the next phrase (**cenra eṇ neñcu**) makes sense when combined with its completing nominal **neñcu** although a pronoun in its oblique form intervenes between them. The phrase means ‘my heart which (has) left.’ When the preceding adverbial participle **nacaḷi** with its fullest details is combined with this phrase, more information about the subject **neñcu** is revealed: ‘my heart which (has) left (me), desiring the soft shoulders of the small woman with bright forehead, maturity blended with bashfulness, and sweet gentle words.’ The particle **ē** in **neñcē** can be understood as ending the poem as well as giving a sense of emphasis or similar sentiment.



When **tōyntanru kollō** is taken together with **neñcē** the reader understands that the subject of the main sentence in the poem is **neñcu** and the finite verb is **tōyntanru**.



The poem is complete now, with the subject of the main sentence revealed as the very last word, **neñcu** 'heart.' The basic idea is expressed in the narration of the hero's rhetorical question to himself. The question is: Whether my heart which left (me) desiring the soft shoulders of (my) small woman, indulged (in that pleasure) as her hands caressed it? The rest of the poem describes how the narrator's heart rushed to reach his woman, the path in which the heart travelled, the house where the woman was waiting, and how the heart might have approached the woman.

A joyful translation¹³:

*Buds of iruppai emerge
like arrow tips stuffed
into swelling quivers,
heads small and sharp, bright
for their task of killing.
Shoots red as copper
plates and in them
the hollow stamens sweet
as butter scratch holes you can see
with their soft ends.*

¹³ This translation was done by George L. Hart.

*Petals grow loose,
spread in the wind like
rain and hail, on steep paths
red as coral, they spread
like fat on thick blood.
Near that wilderness,
a little town:
women with thin curling hair
raise fine pestles with
ornamental rings and beat
their mortars, and their rhythm
seems to echo the crying
of the owls on high, dark hills.
And I pass by, I leave them behind
urged by strength
hurrying even when the sun
falls, it seems my home is
close, horses speed, and I go
never slowing their pace.
Yet,
even faster,
reaching even sooner
standing on one side of our fine
high house as she prays
every time the lizard calls
on the wall, in the evening
when cows go home, he comes
and curving his arms around her,
covers her eyes and touches her back
soft as the trunk of a female
elephant, caressed by*

*her bangled hand:
my woman, chaste and modest,
forehead bright, words
so sweet
My heart has already
gone to her,
covering her soft arms, my heart
has already found its joy.*

SECTION 8

APPENDIX

NOTE: Basically, this appendix contains various affixes, case markers, postpositions, particles, and pronouns. Accompanying each entry in the first list containing the suffixes, etc. are examples and the names of chapters (or paragraphs in some cases) where the entry under consideration or similar examples are discussed. The entries given in italicized type represent the forms of affixes and other items which the reader may identify as items following the stems used in classical Tamil poems. The entries given in non-italicized bold type represent the actual forms of these items as they are discussed in the preceding pages in this volume.



- a

(An item preceding the following suffixes is a bare verb stem, oblique stem, non-oblique stem, past stem ending with a consonant, or a stem followed by the glide y:

-a, -ala, -ar̥ka, -aṇa, -āar̥ka, -āka, -āta, -ika, -iya, -ina, -īiya, -īka, -uka, -una, -uṇa, -ēr̥ka, -aikka, -kka, -kkuna, -ka, -kallāta, -kuva, -ta, -na, -ppa, -ppana, -pa, -paṇa, -va, -vaṇa)

adjectival nouns — kāla, katava, kuḷaviya, maratta, numma, iṇiya, tamiya, kālaṇa, eruttiṇa

adverbs — iṇitāka, nakaiyāka

case markers and postpositions — avara, niṇṇa, niṇa (yāṇai)

imperative/optative — uṇara, vāliya, ceṇṇaikka, ciṇakka, ākuka, keṭuka, varuka

infinitive — cuṇṇa, uṇa, vara, tāṇkiya, uṇarttiya, coliya, kuṭikkiya, veḷḷiya, tāva, maṇakka, niṇka, pukuta, maṇappa, niṇpa

metonymy and metaphor — vāl matilāka

negative adjectival participle — aṇiyāta, olkāta, kaḷikallāta

negative imperative/optative — vāraṇka, maṇāar̥ka, cēr̥er̥ka

negative participial nouns — ceyyāta, iṇṇātana

negative personal verbs — peyarala

non-past adjectival participle — cēr̥kiṇṇa, aṭṭuniṇṇa

non-past participial nouns — piṇaḷṇa, vittuna, taṭukkuna, niṇaikkuna, aṇuppana, koṭpaṇa, koḷvana, varippa, vēṇṭupa, tōṇruva

non-past personal verbs — uḷa, niṇṇa, eytupa, kaluḷpa, keṭuva, paṭukuva, takaippana

past adjectival participle — tāaya, tokka, aṭṭa, ēṇṇa, uṇṭa, kātta, uyamta, pōṇa, pōkiya, cēr̥ttiya, valliya, iṇṇiya, āyiṇa, tuvarina, āṇṇa, uḷuta, kōtta, uyarṭta, tokutta, payanta, arunta, oḷinta

past participial nouns — vēṇṭiya, māṇṭana, oṇṇiyaṇa

past personal verbs — vaḷḷiya, niṇkiya, ceyta, puḷittana, paḷuniṇa, tāyiṇa

-aḥtu

-aḥtu

adjectival nouns — *tollaḥtu*

-akku

-k(k)(u), akk(u), ukk(u)

case markers and postpositions — *niṇakku*, *emakku*

-akam

-akam

case markers and postpositions — *nāḷakam*

-attai

-attai

particles — *paṇiyiyar attai*

ataṇāl

ataṇāl

causal — *ataṇāl*

-atu

-atu

adjectival nouns — *yāṇatu*, *maṭavatu*, *kuḷampinatu*

case markers and postpositions — *kaṭavuḷatu* (*iyarkai*),
nōṇpinatu (*aḷavu*)

negative participial nouns — *peṇātatu*

negative personal verbs — *tōṇṇalatu*

non-past participial nouns — *poykkuvatu*, *citaikuvatu*, *uvappatu*,
uṇpatu, *uṇuvatu*

non-past personal verbs — *vēvatu*

non-past verbal nouns — *kiḷippatu*, *mukiḷppatu*, *kāṇpatu*,
varuvatu, *urivatu*, *muṭivatu*

past participial nouns — *yāttatu*, *uḷḷiyatu*, *ventatu*

past personal verbs — *ceṇṇratu*

verbal nouns — *niṇṇratu*

-atai

-atai

adjectival nouns — *kaiyatai*

non-past verbal nouns — *varuvatai*

past participial nouns — *ūrntatai*

past personal verbs — vantatai, tāl̥ttatai
 verbal nouns — nekiḷntatai, aṭippaṭuttatai, varuvatai

antil

antil

particles — varumē cēyiḷai antil

antō

antō

particles — antō tāṇē

-am

-am

adjectival nouns — uiyram, palam
 imperative/optative — āṇrikam, ayaṁtīkam
 negative personal verbs — vēṇṭalam, piriyalam, toṭukalam
 non-past participial nouns — ariyunam
 non-past personal verbs — aṇcuvam, kāṅkam, cēṇukam,
 kāṅkuvam, peṭkuvam
 particles — poṇ am kompu, teṇ am kumari
 past participial nouns — ciṇantaṇam
 past personal verbs — kaṭintaṇam, kēṭṭaṇam, vēṇṭiṇam
 verbal nouns — ḍccam, uyakkam, veṇṇam, tōṇṇam

amma/ammā

amma/ammā

particles — amma (vāḷi tōḷi), (kāmamum oṇṇu eṇṇa) ammā

ayal

ayal

case markers and postpositions — malai ayal

-ar

-ar

adjectival nouns — kūntalar, villar, ciṇāar, nalattar, tēettar,
 cākāṭṭālar, valaiṇar, viṇainar, nutaliyar, nōṇṇiyar, kōṭṭaiyar,
 kāṭiṇar, nūṇṇiṇar, pakaivar, nakaivar
 case markers and postpositions (vocative) — makāaar
 imperative/optative — tēyar
 infinitive — pēṇiyar, kaṭiyyar
 negative participial nouns — oṇṇalar, poruntalar

negative imperative/optative — mācu ilīyar
 negative personal verbs — ceyyalar, aṛiyalar
 non-past participial nouns — vallar, aṛiyālar, eṛiṇar, pāṭunar,
 uḷarnar, kuyinar, kāṇunar, uṇunar, aṛainar, īkunar,
 malarkkunar, kāṇmar, nacaivar, viraivaṇar
 non-past personal verbs — uḷar, maṛappar, kāṇpar, varuvar,
 ayaṛvar, koṭukkuvar, peṛukuvar
 past participial nouns — valliṇar, vēṇṭiṇar
 past personal verbs — maṛantaṇar, kūṛiṇar
 verbal nouns — vevvar

-avar

adjectival nouns — illavar, puṇarppiṇavar
 negative participial nouns — aruḷātavar, uraikkallātavar
 non-past participial nouns — iruppavar, koḷpavar
 past participial nouns — āyavar, tuṛantavar, naṭṭavar

-arō**-arō**

particles — kuyil ālum arō

-al**-al**

imperative/optative — kāval, tiṛattal
 non-past personal verbs — uraippal, kāṇpal, vaḷval, varuval,
 kāṇkuval
 verbal nouns — keṭal, ariyal, maṛaval, uṇakkal, pōkkal, oḷukal,
 ūṭṭal, akaṛṛal

-(ā)al

negative imperative/optative — peyaraḷ, viṭāal

alla

(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — ariya alla

allatu

(conditional + **allatu**)

negative al and il — kaḷiyiṇ allatu

(nominal+ **al(l)atu**)

negative al and il — peruntakai allatu

allatai(nominal + **allatai**)

negative al and il — oḷintamai allatai

allam(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — vēṛu allam

allar(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — aṛavar allar, nīṭunar allar

(negative personal verb + **al** __)

negative al and il — illaiyum allar, vēḷār allar

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — celvār allar, uyntaṇar allar

allaḷ(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — maruntu allaḷ

(negative personal verb + **al** __)

negative al and il — vēṇṭāḷ allaḷ

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — vāḷkuvaḷ allaḷ

allaṇ(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — koṭiyaṇum allaṇ

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — uṇarkuveṇ allaṇ, īkuvaṇ allaṇ

*-allā***-ā**

negative adjectival participle — paṛakkallā, nuḷaikallā

(nominal + **allā**)

negative al and il — vāy allā veṇmai

*-allāta***-āta**

negative adjectival participle — kaḷikallāta

-allātavar

-avar

negative participial nouns— *uraikkallātavar*

allāl

(conditional + **allāl**)

negative al and il — *perin allāl*

(nominal + **allāl**)

negative al and il — *pakai allāl*

allān

(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — *makan allān*

allir

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — *nīṭuvir allir(ō)*

allīr

-īr

negative imperative/optative— *tolukallīr*

allēm

(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — *kiṭaiṇārēm allēm*

(negative personal verb + **al** __)

negative al and il — *kēḷēm allēm, celvēṁ allēm (eṇṇār)*

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — *uṇkuvam allēm, kāṇēm allēm*

allēn

-ēn

negative personal verbs — *porukkallēn, amaikkallēn*

(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — *nān allēn*

(negative personal verb + **al** __)

negative al and il — *ilēnum allēn*

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — *viṭukkuven allēn, uṭaliṇēn allēn*

allai(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — pētai allai

(personal verb + **al**__)

negative al and il — varuvai allai

allōr(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — puraiyar allōr

*alkalum***alkalum**

collectives and universals — alkalum aḷutal

*-ala***-a**

negative personal verbs — peyarala

*alatu***-atu**

negative personal verbs — tōṇṇalatu

(nominal + **alatu**)

negative al and il — nī alatu

*-alam***-am**

negative personal verbs — vēṇṭalam, piriyalam, toṭukalam

*-alar***-ar**

adjectival nouns — māṇṇalar, ārvalar

negative participial nouns — oṇṇalar, poruntalar

negative personal verbs — ceyyalar, aṇiyalar

*-alaḷ***-aḷ**

negative personal verbs — piḷaiyalaḷ

*-alaṇ***-aṇ**

negative personal verbs — amaikalaṇ, moḷiyalaṇ

(nominal + **al**__)

negative al and il — kēḷ alaṇ

-alām

(verbal noun + **ām**)

potential — *poṛukkal ām* (varaittu)

-aliyarō

-iyarō

negative imperative/optative — *tavāaliyarō*

-alir

-ir

adjectival noun — *nakāalir*

negative personal verbs — *kaḷaḷalir*

-alen

-en

negative personal verbs — *vēṇṭalen*

-alēṇ

-ēṇ

negative personal verbs — *maṇavalēṇ, uḷḷalēṇ, aṛikalēṇ*

(nominal + **al**__)

negative *al* and *il* — *tīyēṇ alēṇ*

-alai

-ai

negative imperative/optative — *poruntalai*

negative personal verbs — *kāṇalai, oḷukalai*

-avar

-avar

adjectival nouns — *illavar, puṇarppinavar*

negative participial nouns — *aruḷātavar, taḷarātavar, uraikkallātavar*

non-past participial nouns — *iruppavar, koḷpavar*

past participial nouns — *āyavar, tuṇantavar, naṭṭavar*

-avaḷ

-avaḷ

adjectival nouns — *nallavaḷ, tuṇakkattavaḷ*

past participial nouns — *kāttavaḷ*

non-past participial nouns — *uṇarppavaḷ, nērpavaḷ*

-avan**-avan**

adjectival nouns — viṛalavan

past participial nouns — vantavan

negative participial nouns — aḷuntātavan

non-past participial nouns — uḷappavan, varaipavan

-avir**-avir**

adjectival nouns — ūravir

past participial nouns — cāṇravir, kaṇṭavir

-avai**-avai**

adjectival nouns — kālavai, nēmiyavai, ampiṇavai

non-past participial nouns — uṭuppavai, urukupavai

past participial nouns — aṭṭavai, citariyavai

past personal verbs — ēntiṇavai

-aḷ**-aḷ**

adjectival nouns — nallavaḷ, tuṛakkattavaḷ

past participial nouns — kāttavaḷ

non-past participial nouns — uṇarppavaḷ, nērpavaḷ

-aḷ

adjectival noun — ciṛumaiyaḷ, tilakattaḷ, cumaṭṭinaḷ

negative personal verbs — piḷaiyalal, melintilaḷ

non-past participial nouns — maṇṇunaḷ, niṇaiyunaḷ, celkuvaḷ,
niṇaivaṇaḷnon-past personal verbs — uvakkuvaḷ, kalaṅkuvaḷ, eṇpaḷ,
varuntuvaḷ, nāṇuvaḷ

past participial nouns — vēṭṭanaḷ, kāttavaḷ

past personal verbs — ēyaḷ, koṇṭanaḷ, viṇaviṇaḷ, toṭaṅkinaḷ,
kavaiiyiṇaḷ, tuṭaiyiṇaḷ**aḷavu****aḷavu**case markers and postpositions — vaiyaka varai aḷavu, muṇṇum
aḷavu

aḷavai

aḷavai

case markers and postpositions — valippaḷavai, muyalvaḷavai

-ar̥ka

-ka

negative imperative/optative — vāraṛka, maṛāaṛka

-aṇ

-avaṇ

adjectival nouns — viṛalavaṇ

past participial nouns — vantaṇ

negative participial nouns — aḷuntātavaṇ

non-past participial nouns — uḷappavaṇ, varaipavaṇ

-aṇ

adjectival nouns — pēṇalaṇ, kaṇṇiyaṇ, mālaiyaṇ, kacciyaṇ, kaḷaliṇaṇ, naṇṇarāḷaṇ, kolaivaṇ, vilaivaṇ

case markers and postpositions — ataṇ niṛam

negative personal verbs — amaikalaṇ, moḷiyalaṇ

non-past participial nouns — kāmuṛunaṇ, viraivaṇaṇ, etirkoḷvaṇ
varaipavaṇ

non-past personal verbs — uḷaṇ, akaḷkkuvaṇ, varukuvaṇ,

karappaṇ, māṛruvaṇ, varuvaṇ

oblique stem — ataṇ

past participial nouns — aṇciṇaṇ ātal

past personal verbs — ceytaṇaṇ, tīrttaṇaṇ, peyarntaṇaṇ,
tāṇkiṇaṇ, taḷḷiyaṇaṇ

-ā(a)ṇ

negative personal verbs — peṛāaṇ

-aṇmār

-mār

negative personal verbs — kēḷaṇmār

-aṇmin

-min

negative imperative/optative — koḷḷaṇmin

*aṇmai***aṇmai**

negative verbal nouns — iṇumpūtu aṇmai

*aṇri***-i**

negative adverbial participle — āṭiyatu aṇri

*aṇṇa***-aṇṇa**

comparison — ciṇaku aṇṇa, kalattaṇṇa, vāmtaṇṇa

*aṇṇō***aṇṇō**

particles — kaṇṇum taṇ paṇi vaikiṇa aṇṇō

aṇru/āṇrō(nominal + **al__**)

negative al and il — kār aṇru

(personal verb + **al__**)

negative al and il — ciṇappāl aṇru, ikaṇtārē aṇrō

-tu

past personal verbs — niṇraṇru

*-aṇa***-a**

adjectival nouns — kālaṇa

past personal verbs — puṭittaṇa

negative participial nouns — iṇṇātaṇa

non-past participial nouns — aṇuppaṇa, koṭpaṇa, koḷvaṇa

non-past personal verbs — takaippaṇa

past participial nouns — māṇtaṇa, niṇaiyyaṇa

*-aṇam***-am**

past participial nouns — ciṇantaṇam

past personal verbs — kēṭṭaṇam, kaṭintaṇam

*-aṇar***-ar**

past personal verbs — maṇantaṇar

-aṇaḷ

-aḷ

non-past participial nouns — niṇaivaṇaḷ

past participial nouns — vēṭṭaṇaḷ

past personal verbs — koṇṭaṇaḷ

-aṇaṇ

-aṇ

past personal verbs — niṇṇaṇaṇ, ceytaṇaṇ, tīrttaṇaṇ,
peyarntaṇaṇ

-aṇār

-ār

non-past participial nouns — eṇmaṇār

-aṇāl

-āl

case markers and postpositions — ataṇāl

-aṇir

-ir

past personal verbs — ottaṇir

past participial nouns — tuṇintaṇir

-aṇiṇ

-iṇ

comparison — itaṇiṇ koṭiyatu

-aṇem

-em

past personal verbs — iṇpuṭṭaṇem

-aṇeṇ

-eṇ

non-past participial nouns — viraivaṇeṇ

past personal verbs — vantaṇeṇ

-aṇēṇ

-ēṇ

past personal verbs — takaittaṇēṇ

-aṇai

-ai

adjectival nouns — notumalāḷaṇai

- past personal verbs — *īttanai*
- aṇaittum*
- anaittum** or **anaittu __um**
- collectives and universals — *aṇaittum nī, aṇaittin uṭporuḷum*
- *ā(a)*
- *ā*
- case markers and postpositions — *arukā, mēlā, amararkkā*
 interrogative — *tantālā*
 negative personal verbs — *ātā*
- *ā(a)*
- infinitive — *maṛaiyā, paṭāa, koḷāa*
 negative adjectival participle — *kalaṅkā, īyā, niṇaiyā, cāvā, pōkā, koṭāa, paṛakkallā, nuḷaikallā*
 negative adverbial participle — *aṇiyā, viṭāa*
 negative participial nouns — *ovvā, uṭāa, pōrā*
- *ā(ka)*
- adverbs — *iṇṇātā*
- *ikā*
- imperative/optative — *kāṇikā, kāṇṭikā*
- *āaar*
- vocative**
- case markers and postpositions — *makāaar*
- *āatu*
- *ā(a)tu*
- negative adverbial participle — *kuṇāatu*
- *āam*
- **um**
- non-past adjectival participle — *avāam*
- *āamal*
- *ā(a)mal*
- negative adverbial participle — *peṇāamal*
- *āamai*
- *ā(a)mai*
- negative adverbial participle — *vaḷāamai*

-āar

-ar

adjectival nouns — ciṛāar

-āal

-al

negative imperative/optative — viṭāal

-āaliyarō

-iyarō

negative imperative/optative — tavāaliyarō

-āalir

-ir

adjectival nouns — nakāalir

-āaṛka

-ka

negative imperative/optative — maṛāaṛka

-āaṇ

-ā(a)ṇ

negative personal verbs — peṛāaṇ

-āka

-ā(ka)

adverbs — iṇitāka, nakaiyāka

(noun + noun + āka)

metonymy and metaphor — vāl matil āka

āṇka

āṇka/āṇku/āṇkē

particles — āṇka (iṇpamum kaviṇum aḷuṇkal mūtūr)

āṇkaṇ

āṇkaṇ

case markers and postpositions — potiṇi āṇkaṇ

āṇku/āṇkē

āṇka/āṇku/āṇkē

particles — āṇku (am mū iru mukaṇum), (aṇciyatu) āṇkē
(aṇaṇku ākum)

āṇku

adverbs — peṭṭāṇku

case markers and postpositions — niṇṇāṅku
comparison — atirntāṅku, nivaṇtāṅku

-āta

-āta

negative adjectival participle — olkāta, aṛiyāta, kaḷikallāta
negative participial nouns — ceyyāta

-ātatu

-atu

negative participial nouns — peṛātatu

-ātavar

-avar

negative participial nouns — aruḷātavar, taḷarātavar,
uraikkallātavar

-ātavaṇ

-avaṇ

negative participial nouns — aḷuntātavaṇ

-ātana

-ātana

adjectival nouns — iṇṇātana

-ātā

-ā(ka)

adverbs — iṇṇātā

-ātāy

-āy

negative participial nouns — uṇarātāy

-ātār

-ār

negative participial nouns — naḷḷātār

-ātāl

-āl

negative participial nouns — vāḷātāl

-ātāṇ

-āṇ

negative participial nouns — utavātāṇ

-āti	
-i	negative imperative/optative — varuntāti
-ātīm	
-īm	negative imperative/optative — cellātīm
-ātīmē	
-īmē	negative imperative/optative — ceppātīmē
-ātīmō	
-īmō	negative imperative/optative — aļātīmō
-ātīr	
-īr	negative participial nouns — aṛiyātīr pōla
-ātu	
-ātu	adjectival nouns — kuṇātu case markers and postpositions — taṇātu negative personal verbs — āṇātu, cāvātu, amaikallātu
-ā(a)tu	negative adverbial participle — āṇātu, aṛiyātu, kainniṛukkallātu, ivarkallātu
-tu	adjectival nouns — iṇṇātu
-ātē	
-ātē	negative adverbial participle — cūlātē
-ātēṇ	
-ēṇ	negative participial nouns — tuṇcātēṇ
-ātōy	
-ōy	negative participial nouns — tārātōy negative personal verbs — aṛiyātōy

- ātōr*
 -*ōr* negative participial nouns — uṇarātōr, oṇṇātōr
- ātōḷ*
 -*ōḷ* negative participial nouns — kaṭiyātōḷ
- ātōṇ*
 -*ōṇ* negative participial nouns — koḷḷātōṇ
- ām*
 -*ām* adjectival nouns — iruvām
 negative personal verbs — eyyām
 non-past personal verbs — kēḷām, niṇruppām, kāṇpām, iruvām,
 celvām
 past participial nouns — puṇarntām
 past personal verbs — kōṭpaṭṭām
 (personal verb + *ām*)
 potential — uṇtām, uyyumām
 (verbal noun + *ām*)
 potential — poṇukkal ām varaittu
- āmal*
 -*ā(a)mal* negative adverbial participle — toypaṭāmal
- āmai*
 -*ā(a)mai* negative adverbial participle — aṇiyāmai
 -*mai* negative verbal nouns — nalkāmai, varaiyāmai
- āy*
 -*āy* adjectival nouns — kātalāy, katuppiṇāy
 adverbs — iṇaiṇciyāy, iyalpiṇṇāy
 imperative/optative — kēḷāy, kāṇṭaiṇṇāy
 negative participial nouns — uṇarātāy, aṇikallāy pōṇi

negative personal verbs — kātṭāy, aṟiyāy, tarukallāy

non-past participial nouns — mēyppāy

non-past personal verbs — tuṟappāy, poyppāy, eṇpāy, pōkuvāy

past participial nouns — kuṟittāy, karutiyāy

past personal verbs — nīṭṭittāy, pārāṭṭiṇāy

vocative

case markers and postpositions — nēriḷāy, katalāy, kiḷaviyāy

-āyiṭai

-āyiṭai

case markers and postpositions — (imayam teṇ am kumariyoṭu) āyiṭai

-āyiṇum

-um

concessive of fact ("although") — (moḷi peyar tēttar) āyiṇum

concessive of supposition ("even if") — (tamiyaḷ) āyiṇum

-ār

-ār

adjectival nouns — nucuppār, neñciṇār

negative participial nouns — poyyār, cālār, pōṟṟār, mēvār, oṇṇār, naḷḷātār, āyvantilār

negative personal verbs — uḷḷār, ceyyār, amaiyār, tīrkkalār, amaikallār, ōvār, koḷḷār, koḷār

non-past participial nouns — nekiḷppār, eṇpār, cāaymār, viḷuvār, aṟivār, eṇmaṇār

non-past personal verbs — tuṟappār, iṟaiṇcuvār

particles — nōvumār (peritē), neṟiyumār (atuvē)

past participial nouns — nalkūmtār, oṇṟiṇār

past personal verbs — cāyttār, ūṭiṇār

-mār

negative participial nouns — kēḷaṇmār

negative imperative/optative — kēḷaṇmār

-ārkaḷ

-ār(kal)

non-past participial nouns — vālṽvārkaṭku (vālṽvārkaḷ + ku)

-āḷ

ataṇāl

causal — ataṇāl

-āl

conditional — kaṇṭāl, eṇṇāl, āṇāl

negative imperative/optative — poyyāl

particles — naṇṇāl, aritāl

verbal nouns — koḷāl

-āl/āṇcase markers and postpositions — poriyāṇ (mañṇai), pōrāl,
ataṇāl, talaiyiṇāl, marattāl, vitiyāṇṇāl(conditional + **allāl**)

negative al and il — perin allāl

(nominal + **allāl**)

negative al and il — pakai allāl

-ālum

-um

concessive of supposition — eṇṇālum

-āl

-āl

adjectival nouns — alkuḷāl, katuppiṇāl

negative participial nouns — vālātāl

negative personal verbs — aṇiyāl, uṇarkallāl

non-past participial nouns — nōy uḷappāl, eṇṇpāl, āṭuvāl

non-past personal verbs — celvāl

past participial nouns — iṇṇāl

past personal verbs — uraittāl, pōyiṇāl

-āḷar

-ar

adjectival nouns — cākāṭṭāḷar

non-past participial nouns — aṇiyāḷar

-āḷaṇ

-aṇ

adjectival nouns — naṇṇarāḷaṇ

-āḷaṇai

-ai

adjectival nouns — notumalāḷaṇai

-āru

-āru

case markers and postpositions — tāṇ vēṇṭum āru

-āṇ

-ā(a)ṇ

negative personal verbs — cūṭāṇ, pōkāṇ, uraikkallāṇ

-āṇ

adjectival nouns — ūrāṇ, perumāṇ, muraciṇāṇ

causal — oḷukalāṇ, uṇmaiyaṇ

negative participial nouns — aṇam cārāṇ, utavātāṇ

non-past participial nouns — nuḷaippāṇ, eṇpāṇ, cuṭuvāṇ pōla

non-past personal verbs — oḷippāṇ, amaivāṇ, parivāṇ, amaikuvāṇ

past participial nouns — kaṭṭiyaṇ, uṇṇiyaṇ, ceytāṇ, poyttāṇ

past personal verbs — koṇṭāṇ, vikkiṇāṇ, malaintāṇ, pārttāṇ

-āḷ/āṇ

case markers and postpositions — poriyāṇ (maṇṇai), (kīl)

nīrāṇ (mīṇ vaḷaṅkuntu)

-pāṇ (p + āṇ)

infinitive — kāṇpāṇ

-vāṇ (v + āṇ)

infinitive — kuḷaivāṇ, nīkkuvāṇ

-āṇāḷ

-āḷ

conditional — āṇāḷ

-āṇum

-āṇum

concessive of fact — illāṇum

concessive of supposition — eṇṇāṇum

yā__um

collectives and universals — yārkkāṇum

-āṇmin

-min

negative imperative/optative — nakāṇmin

-i

-i

adjectival nouns — kaḷvi

adverbial participle — vīci, kalavi, cīi, poṇi, paraii

adverbs — naṇi, iṇi

imperative/optative — vāli, ūkki, kātti, pōṇṇuti

negative adverbial participle — ili, aṇri, iṇri

negative imperative/optative — varuntāti

non-past participial nouns — aṭuvi, uṇaivi, cāntāṇri

non-past personal verbs — iratti, aṇcuti, pōkuti, cēṇi

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — nāṇ ili

-vi

verbal nouns — vēḷvi

-ika

-ika

imperative/optative — ceṇrika

-ikam

-ikam

imperative/optative — āṇrikam

-ikā

-ikā

imperative/optative — kāṇikā, kāṇṭikā

-ikum

-ikum

past personal verbs — kēṭṭikum

-ikai

(k)kai

verbal nouns — uṇṭikai, kārikai, cārikai

-icin

-icin

imperative/optative — āṇricin, vaṭṭitticin

- past personal verbs — maṛanticin̄, āṇricin̄, pōṇricin̄
-icin̄ōr
-ōr
- past participial nouns — iṛanticin̄ōr, paṭaitticin̄ōr
-icin̄ōl̄
-ōl̄
- past participial nouns — pirinticin̄ōl̄
-icin̄ōṇ
-ōṇ
- past personal verbs — ceṇricin̄ōṇ
-iṭam/iṭaṇ
-iṭam/iṭaṇ
- case markers and postpositions — kākkum iṭam, pulampiya
iṭaṇ
-iṭai
-iṭai
- case markers and postpositions — kaṭattiṭai, kōṭṭiṭai, kaiyiṭai,
ūriṭai
-ittai
-ittai
- imperative/optative — pāṭittai
-itu
-tu
- adjectival nouns — vālitu, putitu
-iya
-a
- adjectival nouns — iṇiya, tamiya
infinitive — coliya
past adjectival participle — pōkiya, cērttiya, valliya, irīiya
past participial nouns — vēṇṭiya
past personal verbs — vaḷīiya, nīṅkiya
-iya
imperative/optative — vāliya
-(i)iya
infinitive — tāṅkiya, uṇarttiya, kuṭikkiya, velīiya

*-iyatu***-atu**

past participial nouns — uḷḷiyatu

*-iyar***-ar**

adjectival nouns — nutaliyar, nōṇpiyar

past participial nouns — valliyyar

-iyar(ō)

imperative/optative — ākiyar, varutiyar

negative imperative/optative — iliyar

-(ī)iyar

infinitive — pēṇiyar, kaṭṭiyar

(ī)iyar(ō)

imperative/optative — uṇṭiyar

*-iyarō***-iyar(ō)**

imperative/optative — ākiyarō, niliyarō

negative imperative/optative — tavāaliyarō, kāṇiliyarō

-(ī)iyar(ō)

imperative/optative — celṭiyarō

*-iyāy***-āy**

past participial nouns — karutiyāy

*-iyāṇ***-āṇ**

past participial nouns — kaṭṭiyāṇ

*-iyōy***-ōy**

past participial nouns — kūṭiyōy

past personal verbs — pularttiyōy, vantōy

*-iyōṇ***-ōṇ**

past participial nouns — tappiyōṇ

past personal verbs — nalkiyōṇ

*-ir***-avir**

adjectival nouns — ūravir

past participial nouns — cāṇravir, kaṇṭavir

-ir

adjectival nouns — māntir, kiḷavir, nakāalir

negative personal verbs — kaḷaḷalir

non-past personal verbs — ucātir, aṭtir, eṇṇutir, iraṇkuvir

past participial nouns — tuṇintaṇir

past personal verbs — koṇṭir, ottaṇir, uḷḷiṇir

-ī(i)r

past participial nouns — vilaṇkiyīr

*-il***-il**

case markers and postpositions — arukil

conditional — kaḷikkil

comparison — pitirvil poṇki

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — nukarcci il

-illatu

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — illatu nōkki

-illavaṇ

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — aṇṇ illavaṇ

*-illā***-ā**

negative adjectival participle — nilai illā p poruḷ

-illāṇ

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — nayaṇ illāṇ

-illēṇ

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — maruntu yātum illēṇ

-illai

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — oṇru illai

-illōr

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — uṇarcci illōr

-ila

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — ētu ila

-ilatu

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — tīrvu ilatu āka

-ilam

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — pāramum ilam, ceytanrō ilam

-ilar

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — aruḷ ilar

-ilavaṇ

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — aṇpu ilavaṇ

*-ilaḷ**-aḷ*

negative personal verbs — melintilaḷ

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — vaḷu ilaḷ

-ilaṇ

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — viṇai ilaṇ, vallirrum ilaṇ, maruṅku ilaṇ

*-ilār**-ār*

negative participial nouns — āyvantilār

(nominal + il)

negative al and il — neṇc(u) ilār, uṇarv(u) ilār

-ilālar

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — tāl ilālar

-ilālan

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — aṛan ilālan

-ilān

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — tīt(u) ilān, tāl ilān

-ili

-i

negative adverbial participle — uppu ili ventatai

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — nān ili

-iliyarō

-iyar(ō)

negative imperative/optative — kāṇiliyarō

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — paṛṛal iliyarō

-ilir

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — aṇṇ(u) ilir

-ilīyar

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — mācu ilīyar

-ilīr

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — tavar(u) ilīr

-ilēm

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — tuṇai ilēm

-ilēn

-ēn

negative personal verbs— ilantilēn

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — *tītu ilēṇ, niṇṇal ilēṇ*

-ilai

-ai

negative personal verbs — *niṇaittilai*

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — *aruḷ ilai, tavar(u) ilai*

-ilōr

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — *tiraṇ ilōr*

-ilōḷ

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — *māc(u) ilōḷ*

-irru

-tu

adjectival nouns — *puṇaviṇṇu*

past personal verbs — *uṭkiṇṇu, tāyiṇṇu*

-in

-icin

imperative/optative — *āṇṇicin, vaṭitticin*

past personal verbs — *maṇanticin, āṇṇicin, pōṇṇicin*

-in

adverbs — *nuṇṇitin, nallitin, vālitin, eḷitin, uritin*

case markers and postpositions — *varaippin ippolil, maṇaiyinin*

causal — *katuvalin, ākalin, ātalin, orālin, terutalin, vaḷamaiyin,*

iṇmaiyin, kāṇāmaiyin, vārāmaiyin

conditional — *varin, tuṇcin, kāṇin, pōkin, iruppin, kēṭkin, kēṭpin*

comparison — *urumin urarupu cilaippa, itanin koṭiyatu*

-inm

-m

negative personal verbs — *puṇarvu inm*

(nominal + **il**)

negative al and il — *puṇarvu inm*

*-inmai***-mai**

negative verbal nouns — pāyal inmai, aḷi inmai

*-inri***-i**

negative adverbial participle — kavalpu inri

*-inru***-u**negative adverbial participle — inru
(nominal + il)

negative al and il — koṭiyōr inru, uyvu inru

-tu

adjectival nouns — veṅkuṟumpinru

past personal verbs — curuṅkinru

*-ina***-a**

adjectival nouns — eruttiṇa

past adjectival participle — āyiṇa, tuvariṇa

past personal verbs — paḷuniṇa

past participial nouns — orīyiṇa pōla, cūṭiṇa ... muttam

*-inatu***-atu**

adjectival nouns — kuḷampinatu

case markers and postpositions — nōṇpinatu aḷavu

*-inam***-am**

past personal verbs — vēṇṭinam

*-inar***-ar**

adjectival nouns — kāṭinar, nūṟṟinar

past participial nouns — vēṇṭinar

past personal verbs — kūṟinar

*-inavar***-avar**

adjectival nouns — puṇarppinavar

*-iṇavai***-avai**

adjectival nouns — ampiṇavai
 past personal verbs — ētiṇavai

*-iṇaḷ***-aḷ**

adjectival nouns — cumattiṇaḷ
 past personal verbs — toṭaṅkiṇaḷ, tuṭaiyiṇaḷ, viṇaviṇaḷ, taḷīyiṇaḷ

*-iṇaṇ***-aṇ**

adjectival nouns — kaḷaliṇaṇ, kacciṇaṇ
 past participial nouns — aṇciṇaṇ ātal
 past personal verbs — tāṅkiṇaṇ, taḷīyiṇaṇ

*-iṇāy***-āy**

adjectival nouns — katuppiṇāy
 past personal verbs — pārāṭṭiṇāy

*-iṇār***-ār**

adjectival nouns — neṇciṇār
 past participial nouns — oṇriṇār vālkkai
 past personal verbs — ūṭiṇār

*-iṇāl***-āl**

case markers and postpositions — talaiyiṇāl

*-iṇāl***-āl**

adjectival nouns — katuppiṇāl
 past participial nouns — iṇrāl
 past personal verbs — pōyiṇāl

*-iṇāṇ***-āṇ**

adjectival nouns — muraciṇāṇ
 past participial nouns — uṇṭiyiṇāṇ
 past personal verbs — vikkiṇāṇ

*-iṇir***-ir**

past personal verbs — uḷḷiṇir

*-iṇin***-in**

adverbs — uritiṇin

case markers and postpositions — maṇaiyiṇin

comparison — kuṇṇiṇin

*-iṇum***-um**

comparison — kūṭiṇum, nammiṇum, nummiṇum

concessive of fact — āyiṇum, collinum, aḷippiṇum

concessive of supposition — ākiṇum, āyiṇum, ūṭiṇum, kaḷiyiṇum,
vēṇṭiṇum, peyariṇum*-iṇem***-em**

past personal verbs — curukkiṇem

*-iṇeṇ***-eṇ**

adjectival nouns — katuppiṇeṇ

past personal verbs — nōkkiṇeṇ

*-iṇēm***-ēm**

adjectival nouns — neñciṇēm

past personal verbs — oṇṇiṇēm

*-iṇēṇ***-ēṇ**

adjectival nouns — aṇiviṇēṇ

past personal verbs — uḷḷiṇēṇ

*-iṇai***-ai**

adjectival nouns — maintiṇai

past personal verbs — niṇaiyiṇai, collinai

- iṇōy
-ōy
adjectival nouns — marapiṇōy
- iṇōr
-ōr
past participial nouns — nīṭiṇōr
- iṇōṇ
-ōṇ
adjectival nouns — munpiṇōṇ
- ī
-ī
imperative/optative — vanti
non-past personal verbs — uḷartī
- īi
-i
adverbial participle — cīi, porīi
- īiya
-(ī)iya
infinitive — velīiya
- īiyar
-(ī)iyar
infinitive — kaṭīiyar
- (ī)iyar(ō)
imperative/optative — uṇīiyar, celīiyar
- īiyarō
-(ī)iyar(ō)
imperative/optative — celīiyarō
- īiyāṇ
-āṇ
past participial nouns — kaṭīiyāṇ
- īiyiṇāṇ
-āṇ
past participial nouns — uṇīiyiṇāṇ

-īr	
-ī(i)r	past participial nouns — vilāṅkiyīr
-īka	
-īka	imperative/optative — ceṇṇīka
-īkam	
-īkam	imperative/optative — ayaṇṇīkam
-īttai	
-īttai	imperative/optative — niṇṇīttai
-īm	
-īm	negative imperative/optative — cellātim
-īmin	
-īmin	imperative/optative — kēṭṭimin
-īmē	
-īmē	negative imperative/optative — ceppātimē
-īmō	
-īmō	imperative/optative — ceytimō
	negative imperative/optative — aḷātimō
-īyar	
-īyar	negative imperative/optative — mācu ilīyar
-īr	
-īr	adjectival nouns — ūrīr
	negative imperative/optative — toḷukallīr
	negative participial nouns — aṇiyāṭīr pōla
	negative personal verbs — āṇīr
	non-past personal verbs — maruḷṭīr, eṇṇīr, viṇavuvīr

past personal verbs — ceytīr, kāṇīr(ō)
non-past participial nouns — varuvīr

-ī(i)r

past participial nouns — palcāṇīr

-u

-ā(a)tu

negative adverbial participle — kuṛāatu, ānātu, aṛiyātu,
niṛukkallātu, ivarkallātu

-u

adverbial participle — porutu, peytu, kāttu, ventu, vēṭtu, koṇtu,
kaṛru, āṇru

imperative/optative — iyaikku

negative adverbial participle — iṇru

non-past personal verbs — teḷikku, nukarku

verbal nouns — kuḷūu

-(p)pu

verbal nouns — maṇappu

-pu (p+u)

infinitive — ninaipu

-vu

verbal nouns — kaḷaivu

-ukku

-k(k)(u), akk(u), ukku

case markers and postpositions — peyavukku, matiṇukku

-uka

-(k)ka

imperative/optative — ākuka, keṭuka, varuka

-ukam

-am

non-past personal verbs — cērukam

uṭaṇ

-uṭaṇ

case markers and postpositions — aintu uṭaṇ pōrri, kāṭuṭaṇ,
kiḷaiyuṭaṇ, avar uṭaṇ nērvarkol

-*uṭai(ya)*

-*uṭai(ya)*

case markers and postpositions — muttu uṭai maruppiṇ, ninṇuṭai
vāḷkkai, cīr uṭaiya ilai

-*untu*

-*untu*

non-past personal verbs — vaḷaṅkuntu

-*una*

-*a*

non-past participial nouns — taṭukkuna, niṇaikkuna, vittuna,
paṇṇuna

-*unar*

-*ar*

non-past participial nouns — pāṭunar, īkunar, kāṇunar

-*unaḷ*

-*aḷ*

non-past participial nouns — maṇṇunaḷ, niṇaiyunaḷ

-*unaṇ*

-*aṇ*

non-past participial nouns — kāmuṇaṇ

-*unai*

-*ai*

non-past participial nouns — koḷḷunai

-*um*

-*āṇum*

concessive of fact — illāṇum

concessive of supposition — eṇṇāṇum

-*ikum*

past personal verbs — kēṭṭikum

-*iṇum*

concessive of fact — collīṇum, alippīṇum

concessive of supposition — ākīṇum, kaḷiyīṇum, vēṇṭīṇum,
peyaṇīṇum

-*um*

adverbs — naṇṇum, peritum

case markers and postpositions — *maḱaḷirullum, ellāruḷlum*
 comparison — *kūṭiṇum, nammiṇum,*
 concessive of fact — *kaṇṭum, aṇṇiyum, āyiṇum, kalavavum,*
varavum, ākavum
 concessive of supposition — *āyiṇum, ūṭiṇum, eṇṇālum*
 non-past adjectival participle — *piṇikkum, niṇaikkum, kaṭkum,*
eṭuppum, tarūum, niṇaiyum
 non-past personal verbs — *kāṇkum, piritum, cellum, varūum,*
irakkum, niṛkum, tēmpum, tiriyum, viyakkum, amaikum,
eṭuppum, ceṇṇum, cēṇum, pōlum
 particles — *moḷitalum, naṇṇum*

ellā _ um

collectives and universals — *ellā maṇaiyum, ellā uyirkkum*

ellār _ um

collectives and universals — *ellārkkum, ellar puṇaṇum, ellār*
maṇaiyum, ellāruḷlum

-m

imperative/optative — *ōm, uṇm, tam, vārum*

yā _ um

collectives and universals — *yāṇkum, yāṇkaṇum, yāṇṭōrum,*
yātum, yātonṇum, yārkkāṇum, yāraiylum, yāvatum,
yāvarum, yāvīrum, yāvīrāyiṇum, yāvaiyum

umpar**-umpar**

case markers and postpositions — *vēṇkaṭattu umpar*

uḷi**-uḷi**

case markers and postpositions — *ceṇṇuḷi, celvuḷi, kētpuḷi*

uḷai**-uḷai**

case markers and postpositions — *avaṇuḷai*

uḷ**-uḷ**

case markers and postpositions — *kaliṇkattuḷ, uḷḷuḷ*
 verbal nouns — *viḷaiyuḷ*

*uḷḷum***-uḷḷum**

case markers and postpositions — *maḷaiṟuḷḷum*, *ellāruḷḷum*
 comparison — *maḷaiṟuḷḷum*

*uḷḷē***-uḷḷē**

case markers and postpositions — *uḷḷē kaṇalum uḷḷam*

*uḷa***-a**

non-past personal verbs — *veṟiyum uḷa*

*-uḷi***-uḷi**

case markers and postpositions — *muṟaiyuḷi*, *marapuḷi*

*-uḷē***-u(l)ḷē**

case markers and postpositions — *nīruḷē*

*-ūu***-u**

verbal nouns — *kuḷūu*

-(ū)u

imperative/optative — *orūu*

infinitive — *kāṇūu*, *pīḷiyūu*

non-past adjectival participle — *etirkoḷūu nālam*

*-ūu niṇra***-ūu**

non-past adjectival participle — *aṭūu niṇra yākkai*

*-ūum***-um**

non-past adjectival participle — *tarūum*, *varūum*

non-past personal verbs — *varūum*, *toḷūum*, *porūum*, *neritarūum*
puṇal

particles — *iṇṇatūum*

*ūṇkaṇ***-ūṇkan**

case markers and postpositions — *uyar varaikku ūṇkaṇ*

- ūñku*
-ūñku
 case markers and postpositions — paravā ūñku, inṛiñ ūñkum
- ūṭu*
-ūṭu
 case markers and postpositions — tukil ūṭu
- ūḷ*
-ūḷ
 case markers and postpositions — pal ūḷ
- e ____ um*
e ____ um
 collectives and universals — ellāmum, e-v-vakai-c-ceytiyum
- etir(ē)*
-etir(ē)
 case markers and postpositions — kai etirē, ataṇ etirē
- em*
-em
 past personal verbs — inṇuṇṇem, curukkinem
 non-past personal verbs — kāṇkuvem
- ellā*
ellā __ m
 collectives and universals — ellā maṇaiyum, ellā uyirkkum
- ellām*
-ellām
 collectives and universals — pulavar ellām, vaḷakkam ellāmum
- ellār*
ellār __ um
 collectives and universals — ellārkkum, ellār puṇum, ellār māvum, ellāruḷḷum
- ellārum*
ellārum
 collectives and universals — ellārum aṛiya
- ellīrum*
ellīrum
 collectives and universals — ellīrum eṇ ceytīr

-*ellai*

-ellai

case markers and postpositions — *nerunal ellai*, *nāyirru ellai*,
naṇṇāl talaivarum ellai

ellōrkkum

ellōr __ um

collectives and universals — *ellōrkkum koṭumati*

-*eṇ*

-eṇ

adjectival nouns — *paricileṇ*

imitative words — *iḷum-eṇ* (*cummai*)

negative personal verbs — *vēṇtaleṇ*

non-past participial nouns — *kūruveṇ pōla*, *viraivaṇeṇ*

non-past personal verbs — *uḷeṇ*, *peyarkkuveṇ*, *maṇaikuveṇ*,
maṇappeṇ(ō), *kāṇpeṇ*, *taṇṭuveṇ*

past participial nouns — *takaittaṇeṇ allal*

past personal verbs — *toṭutteṇ*, *vantaṇeṇ*, *nōkkiṇeṇ*

eṇra

imitative words — *pullenra*

eṇrāl

-āl

conditional — *aṇikuvatu eṇrāl*

eṇrālum

-um

concessive of supposition — *eṇrālum*

eṇrum

eṇrum

collectives and universals — *eṇrum cellēṇ*

-*eṇṇa*

-eṇṇa

comparison — *mati eṇṇa*

eṇṇatūum

eṇṇatūum

collectives and universals — *aruvippāṭum eṇṇatūum*

eṇṇalum

eṇṇalum

collectives and universals — eṇṇalum pariyalō ilam

e ṇ(n)ai __ um

eṇ(n)ai __ um

collectives and universals — eṇṇai nī ceyyiṇum, eṇai p pakaiyum

-eṇa

-e(n)ṇa

adverbs — melleṇa, teṇṇa

comparison — kaṇ eṇa

imitative words — iḷum eṇa

particles — oṇu eṇa ... toṇu eṇa

eṇaitt __ um

eṇaitt __ um

collectives and universals — eṇaittāṇum, eṇaittu oṇum

eṇaittum

eṇaittum

collectives and universals — eṇaittum koṭumai

-ē

-ē

case markers and postpositions — nilaiyē, talaīyē, kaṭuñciṇavēntē, piṇakkē, neñcē (vocative)

imperative/optative — vāvē

interrogative — nallaṇ aṇṇē

negative adverbial participle — cūlātē

particles — kaṇṭikumē, aritē

-mē

imperative/optative — ceṇmē

-ēem

-ē(e)m

negative personal verbs — poyppa viṭēem

-ēeṇ

-eṇ

negative personal verbs — viṭēeṇ

*-ēl***-ēl**

conditional — eṇṛīrēl, uṇṭēl, viṭuvāyēl
 negative conditional — aṇṛēl, kāṭṭāyēl
 negative imperative/optative — ālēl
 negative personal verbs — vārēl

*-ēm***-ēm**

adjectival nouns — pācaraiyēm, neñcinēm
 non-past participial nouns — kaṇroṭu celvēṃ
 non-past personal verbs — nukarkēm, aṇivippēm, kaṭikuvēm,
 poruvēm, nōvēṃ(ō)
 past participial nouns — aḷi peṇṇēm emmai
 past personal verbs — vēṭṭēm, oṇṇiṇēm, uraittēm

-ē(e)m

negative personal verbs — kūṛēm, uḷḷēm, viṭēm

*-ēṛka***-ka**

negative imperative/optative — cēṛēṛka

*-ēṇ***-ēṇ**

adjectival nouns — uṇṭiyēṇ, aṇivīṇēṇ
 negative participial nouns — tuñcātēṇ
 negative personal verbs — vārēṇ, cellēṇ, māttēṇ, aṇiyēṇ,
 maṇavalēṇ, uḷḷalēṇ, poṇukkallēṇ, aṇikalēṇ, amaikallēṇ, iḷantilēṇ
 non-past participial nouns — toṭuppēṇ pōla, kāṇpēṇ, taruvēṇ
 non-past personal verbs — uḷḷēṇ, āṇṇukēṇ, iṇukkuvēṇ, aṇikuvēṇ,
 uvappēṇ, kāṇpēṇ, aṇivēṇ, maruḷvēṇ
 past participial nouns — iṇṇrēṇ, niṇṇrēṇ, takaittaṇēṇ
 past personal verbs — eṭuttēṇ, vantaṇēṇ, tōṇṇiyēṇ, takaittaṇēṇ,
 uḷḷiṇēṇ

*-ai***-ai**

adjectival nouns — tāyai, tērai, uḷḷattai, notumalāḷaṇai, maintiṇai
 adverbs — vallai

case markers and postpositions — tuṛaiṇai, vēḷattai
 imperative/optative — kāṇṭai, vantai, pāṭittai, niṇṇittai
 negative imperative/optative — poruntalai
 negative personal verbs — kāṇalai, oḷukalai, niṇaittilai
 non-past participial nouns — veyyai, vallai, koḷḷunai
 non-past personal verbs — ceykuvai, puṇarkuvai, āvai, eṇcuvai,
 kataḷvai
 past participial nouns — aṭṭavai
 past personal verbs — ṭṭaṇai, niṇaiyiṇai
 verbal nouns — naṭai, kavitai, muṭantai, varuvatai, nekiḷntatai,
 aṭippaṭuttatai

-atai

adjectival nouns — kaiyatai
 past participial nouns — ūrntatai, vantatai, tāḷttatai

-avai

adjectival nouns — nēmiyavai, kālavai, ampiṇavai
 non-past participial nouns — uṭuppavai, urukupavai
 past participial nouns — aṭṭavai, citariyavai
 past personal verbs — ēṇṇavai

-(k)kai

verbal nouns — uṇṭikai, kārikai, cārikai, tīrkai, irukkai

-vai

verbal nouns — vēyvai

-aikka**-aikka**

imperative/optative — cenṇaikka

-aikā**-aikā**

imperative/optative — kaṇṭaikā

-aippāy**-aippāy**

imperative/optative — kāṇṭaippāy

-oṭu

-oṭu, ōṭu

case markers and postpositions — peyaroṭu, cērppaṇoṭu,
niṇṇoṭu

oruvarum

oruvarum

collectives and universals — oruvarum illai

oruvar__um

oruvar__um

collectives and universals — oruvarkum poyyā

onrum

onrum

collectives and universals — pilai onrum

-ō

-ō

case markers and postpositions (vocative) — ceyyāyō
imperative/optative — pōṛṛō
interrogative — allaṇō, kāṇāmō, tuṇcāyō, vārāyō
particles — tuyilō, uraikkō, varukō, aṇcāyō

(personal verb + al)

negative al and il — niṭṭuvir allirō

-mō

imperative/optative — uraimō, viyaṇkoṇmō, ceṇmō

-ōṭu

-oṭu, ōṭu

case markers and postpositions — ivaḷōṭu, marattōṭu,
peruntakaiyōṭu

-ōm

-ōm

non-past personal verbs — tirkuvōm

-ōy

-ōy

adjectival nouns — katalōy, mārpiṇōy
non-past participial nouns — amarpōy, celvōy
past participial nouns — vantōy, kūṭiyōy

- past personal verbs — vantōy, pularttiyōy
- ōr**
- ōr**
- adjectival nouns — iṇāṇōr, kātalōr, nallōr, putuvōr, nilattōr
 negative participial nouns — uṇarātōr, oṇṇātōr
 non-past participial nouns — arakkuvōr, ūrkuvōr, malarppōr, kāṇpōr, niṇaiyumōr, valluvōr, varaivōr
 past participial nouns — iṇantōr, puṇariyōr, iṇanticiṇōr, paṭaitticiṇōr, nīṭiṇōr
 past personal verbs — ceytōr, koṭuttōr
- ōrum**
- ōrum**
- particles — maṭa mayil ōrum maṇaiyavar
- ōḷ**
- ōḷ**
- adjectival nouns — maṇaiyōḷ
 negative participial nouns — kaṭiyātōḷ
 non-past participial nouns — pulampuvōḷ, iṇaivōḷ
 past participial nouns — niṇṇōḷ, piṇinticiṇōḷ
 past personal verbs — iṇaiṇciyōḷ
- ōṇ**
- ōṇ**
- adjectival nouns — kiḷavōṇ, tammōṇ, muṇpiṇōṇ, uṭukkaiyōṇ
 negative participial nouns — koḷḷātōṇ
 non-past participial nouns — aṇiyumōṇ
 past participial nouns — tappiyōṇ, uyarntōṇ
 past personal verbs — paṭarntōṇ, nalkiyōṇ, ceṇṇiciṇōṇ
- kka**
- a**
- infinitive — maṇakka, ēṇṇipikka
- aikka**
- imperative/optative — ceṇṇaikka
- (k)ka**
- imperative/optative — ciṇakka, ēmākka, piriṇyātirukka, tarikka

-kkal

-(k)kal

verbal nouns — niṛaikkal

-kkallā

-ā

negative adjectival participle — paṛakkallā

-kkallātavar

-avar

negative participial nouns — uraikkallātavar

-kkallātu

-ā(a)tu

negative adverbial participle — kainniṛukkallātu

-kkalār

-ār

negative personal verbs — tīrkkalār

-kkallāṇ

-ā(a)ṇ

negative personal verbs — uraikkallāṇ

-kkallēṇ

-ēṇ

negative personal verbs — poṛukkallēṇ

-kkiya

-(i)iya

infinitive — kuṭikkiya

-kkil

-il

conditional — kaḷikkil

-kku

-u

non-past personal verbs — teḷikku

-k(k)(u), akk(u), ukk(u)

case markers and postpositions — niṇakku, emakku, mutumaikku, peyarvukku, matiṇṇukku

-kku

imperative/optative — piṛakku

	verbal nouns — cerukku
-kkuna	
-a	
	non-past participial nouns — taṭukkuna, niṭaikkuna pōla
-kkunar	
-ar	
	non-past participial nouns — malarkkunar
-kkum	
-um	
	non-past adjectival participle — piṇikkum, niṇaikkum kālai
	non-past personal verbs — irakkum, viyakkum
-kkuvatu	
-atu	
	non-past participial nouns — poykkuvatu
-kkuvaḷ	
-aḷ	
	non-past personal verbs — uvakkuvaḷ
	(personal verb + al)
	negative al and il — pulakkuvaḷ allaḷ
-kkuvaṇ	
-aṇ	
	non-past personal verbs — akaḷkkuvaṇ
	(personal verb + al)
	negative al and il — tuṛakkuvaṇ allan
-kkuveṇ	
-eṇ	
	non-past personal verbs — peyarkkuveṇ
-kkuvēm	
-ēm	
	non-past personal verbs — tīrkkuvēm
-kkuvēṇ	
-ēṇ	
	non-past personal verbs — irukkuvēṇ

- kkuvōm*
 -**ōm**
 non-past personal verbs — *tīrkkuvōm*
- kkēm*
 -**ē(e)m**
 non-past personal verbs — *pulakkēm*
- kkai*
 -(**k**)**kai**
 verbal nouns — *irukkai, kākkai*
- kkō*
 -**ō**
 particles — *uraikkō*
- ka*
 -**a**
 infinitive — *niṛka*
- ā(ka)**
 adverbs — *iṇitāka, nakaiyāka*
- ika**
 imperative/optative — *ceṇṇika*
- īka**
 imperative/optative — *ceṇṇīka*
- (**k**)**ka**
 imperative/optative — *keṭuka, ākuka, varuka*
- ka**
 negative imperative/optative — *vāraṅka, maṇāṅka, cēṇṇēṇka*
- kaṭai*
 -**kaṭai**
 case markers and postpositions — *puṇam kaṭai, ilam kaṭai, āṭum kaṭai, vanta-k-kaṭai, mēvā-k-kaṭai*
- kaṇ*
 -**kaṇ**
 case markers and postpositions — *taṇ kaṇ, eruttiṇ kaṇ, toṭaṇkaṇkaṇ, aṭaittakkaṇṇum*

- kam*
- am**
non-past personal verbs — cēṛukam, kāṇkam
- ikam**
imperative/optative — āṇṛikam
- īkam**
imperative/optative — ayaṛntīkam
- kamā*
- kamā**
imperative/optative — maṇṇukamā, polikamā
- kal*
- al**
verbal nouns — maṛukal
- kallā*
- ā(a)**
negative adjectival participle — nuḷaikallā
- kallāta*
- āta**
negative adjectival participle — kaḷikallāta
- kallātu*
- ātu**
negative personal verbs — amaikallātu
- ā(a)tu**
negative adverbial participle — ivarkallātu
- kallāy*
- āy**
negative personal verbs — tarukallāy
negative participial nouns — aṛikallāy pōṛi
- kallār*
- ār**
negative personal verbs — amaikallār
- kallāl*
- āl**
negative personal verbs — uṇarkallāl

<i>-kallīr</i>	
<i>-īr</i>	negative imperative/optative — toḷukallīr
<i>-kallēṇ</i>	
<i>-ēṇ</i>	negative personal verbs — amaikallēṇ
<i>-kalam</i>	
<i>-am</i>	negative personal verbs — toṭukalam
<i>-kalan</i>	
<i>-an</i>	negative personal verbs — amaikalan
<i>-kalēṇ</i>	
<i>-ēṇ</i>	negative personal verbs — aṛikalēṇ
<i>-kalai</i>	
<i>-ai</i>	negative personal verbs — oḷukalai
<i>-kaḷ</i>	
<i>-ārkaḷ</i>	non-past participial nouns — vāḷvārkaḷ
<i>-kaḷ</i>	singular and plural — iyaṅkaḷ
<i>-kā</i>	
<i>-ā</i>	negative adjectival participle — pōkā
<i>-ikā</i>	imperative/optative — kāṇikā, kāṇṭikā
<i>-aikā</i>	imperative/optative — kaṇṭaikā
<i>kāṇ</i>	
<i>-kāṇ</i>	particles — aritu kāṇ, koṭiyai kāṇ

*kāl***-kāl(ai)**case markers and postpositions — oru *kāl*, paṭuṅkāl,
kaṭantakkāl, ciṟappuṇākkāl*kālai***-kāl(ai)**case markers and postpositions — uyirtta *kālai**-kārum***-kārum**case markers and postpositions — ēl *kārum**-kāṇ***-ā(a)ṇ**

negative personal verbs — pōkāṇ

*-kil***kil**

The Compound Stem — aṟikilēṇ

*-kiṇ***-iṇ**

conditional — kēṭkiṇ

*kīl***-kīl**case markers and postpositions — kuḷakkīl, maṇṇavaṇ *kīl**-ku***-u**

non-past personal verbs — nukarku

-k(k)(u), akk(u), ukk(u)case markers and postpositions — mākkatku, vālvārkatku,
nāṭarku, cērparku**-ku**

adverbs — naṇku

comparison — vāliyōṟku avaṇ ilaiyaṇ

imperative/optative — āku

*-kuti***-i**

non-past personal verbs — pōkuti

- kutum*
 -um
 non-past personal verbs — ākutum
- kunar*
 -ar
 non-past participial nouns — īkunar, kēṭkunar
- kunaḷ*
 -aḷ
 non-past participial nouns — perukunaḷ
- kum*
 -ikum
 past personal verbs — kēṭṭikum
 -um
 non-past adjectival participle — kaṭkum
 non-past personal verbs — kāṅkum, niṛkum, amaikum
- kurai*
 -kurai
 particles — arum kuraiyai, kaṭum kurai
- kuva*
 -a
 non-past personal verbs — paṭukuva
- kuvatu*
 -atu
 non-past personal verbs — citaikuvatu
- kuvam*
 -am
 non-past personal verbs — kāṅkuvam, peṭkuvam
- kuvar*
 -ar
 non-past personal verbs — perukuvar
- kuval*
 -al
 non-past personal verbs — kāṅkuval

-kuvaḷ	
-aḷ	non-past participial noun — celkuvaḷ
-kuvāy	
-āy	non-past personal verbs — pōkuvāy
-kuvāṇ	
-āṇ	non-past personal verbs — amaikuvāṇ
-kuvem	
-em	non-past personal verbs — kāṇkuvem
-kuvēm	
-ēm	non-past personal verbs — kaṭikuvēm
-kuvēṇ	
-ēṇ	non-past personal verbs — aṇikuvēṇ
-kuvai	
-ai	non-past personal verbs — ceykuvai, puṇarkuvai
-kuvōr	
-ōr	non-past participial nouns — ūrkuvōr
-kēṇ	
-ēṇ	non-past personal verbs — āṇṇukēṇ
-kai	
-(k)kai	verbal nouns — tīrkai, uṇṭikai, kārikai, cārikai
koṇṭu	
-koṇṭu	case markers and postpositions — nuṇkōl koṇṭu, ataṇkoṇṭu, itaṇkoṇṭu

-*kol(lō)*

-kol(lō)

particles — yārkol, pōyiṇṇu kollō

-*kon(ṇu)*

-kon(ṇu)

particles — konṇu nampum, konṇonṇu

-*kō*

-ō

particles — varukō, nōkō

-*cci*

-(c)ci

verbal nouns — cūlcci

-*ccu*

-ccu

verbal nouns — vaḷaiccu

cār

-cār

case markers and postpositions — kāṭṭuccār

-*ci*

-ci

verbal nouns — kāṭci

ciṛai

-ciṛai

case markers and postpositions — oru ciṛai

-*ñar*

-ar

adjectival nouns — valaiñar

non-past participial nouns — eṇiñar

ñāṇkar

-ñāṇkar

case markers and postpositions — neṭuṇkōṭṭu ñāṇkar, vayal
koṇṭa ñāṇkar, pularā ñāṇkar

-ñāṇru

-ñāṇru

case markers and postpositions — vilāṅku ñāṇru, piṇanta ñāṇru,
oru ñāṇru

-ñāṇrai

-ñāṇrai

case markers and postpositions — vanta ñāṇrai

-ttatu

-atu

past participial nouns — yāttatu

-ttatai

-ai

past participial nouns — aṭippaṭuttatai

past personal verbs — uṭaittatai ... vaiyai, tāḷttatai, uraittatai

verbal nouns — citaittatai

-ttal

-(t)tal

imperative/optative — tiṛattal

verbal nouns — irattal

-tti

-i

imperative/optative — kātti

non-past personal verbs — iratti

-ttu

-(t)tu

adjectival nouns — putuvōrttu

past participial nouns — vaittu

-ttai

-ai

adjectival nouns — uḷḷattai

-ittai

imperative/optative — pāṭittai

-īttai

imperative/optative — niṇṇittai

- ta*
-a
 infinitive — pukuta
 past adjectival participle — uḷuta nōṇ pakatu
- tatai*
-ai
 verbal nouns — ūmtatai, nekiḷntatai
- tam*
-tam
 case markers and postpositions — puraiyōrtam uḷ nīr
- tal*
-(t)tal
 imperative/optative — viṭutal
 verbal nouns — aṛital
- talai*
-talai
 case markers and postpositions — marantalai, ataṇtalai, kaṇavin
 talai, eṇ talai
- taṇ*
-taṇ
 case markers and postpositions — ivaṇ taṇ kai
- tāṇ*
-tāṇ
 particles — atu tāṇ, takaiyōtāṇ
 pronouns — tāṇ
- ti*
-āti
 negative imperative/optative — varuntāti
- ti**
 imperative/optative — pōṛṇuti
 verbal nouns — amaiti
 non-past personal verbs — aṇcuti, pōkuti, cēṛi (cel + ti)
- tiyar*
-iyar(ō)
 imperative/optative — varutiyar

- tir**
-ir
 non-past personal verbs — ucātir, aṛitir, eṇṇutir
- til(la)**
-til(la)
 particles — muṭika til, maṛantaṇarō til, celvēm tilla
- tīram/tīraṇ**
-tīram/tīraṇ
 case markers and postpositions — avar tīram celvēṇ, vēṭṭōr
 tīratu, oru tīraṇ
- tī**
-ī
 imperative/optative — vantī
 non-past personal verbs — uḷartī
- tīm**
-īm
 negative imperative/optative — cellātīm
- tīmē**
-īmē
 negative imperative/optative — ceppātīmē
- tīmō**
-īmō
 imperative/optative — ceytīmō
- tīr**
-īr
 non-past personal verbs — maruḷtīr
 past personal verbs — ceytīr
- tu** Look under -atu, -aḥtu, -aṇru, -āatu, -ātu, -itu, -irru, -inru,
 and -untu.
- tum**
-um
 non-past personal verbs — piritum, verūtum, varutum

teyya

-teyya

particles — taṅkiṇ evaṇō teyya, col iṇi t teyya, teyya ...
nēṭiṇar cella

teyyō

-teyyō

particles — vālēm teyyō

-tai Also look under *-atai*.

-ai

imperative/optative — vantai

-tai

verbal nouns — kavitai, muṭantai

-toru(m)

-toru(m)

case markers and postpositions — uḷḷutoru, cimaitorūm

-tōru(m)

-tōru(m)

case markers and postpositions — vaikal tōru, nāl tōrum

-na

-a

non-past participial nouns — piṛaḷna, vittuna, niṛaikkuna,
taṭukkuna

naṭuvaṇ

-naṭuvaṇ

case markers and postpositions — ceḷunakar naṭuvaṇ

-nar

-ar

non-past participial nouns — pāṭunar, uṛunar, aṛainar,
viraivanar, malarkkunar, uḷarnar, īkunar, kāṇunar, kuyinar

-naḷ

-aḷ

non-past participial nouns — maṇṇunaḷ, niṇaiyunaḷ

-naṇ

-an

non-past participial nouns — kāmuṇunaṇ

nāppaṇ

-nāppaṇ

case markers and postpositions — pāṛkaṭal nāppaṇ,
vaiyeyiṛṛavar nāppaṇ

nāḷum

nāḷum

collectives and universals — nāḷum eṇ neṇcu piṇikkoṇṭa

niṇṛu(m)

-niṇṛu(m)

case markers and postpositions — avaṇ niṇṛum, karai niṇṛu

nēr

nēr

comparison — poṇ nēr pacalai

-nai

ai

non-past participial nouns — koḷḷunai

-ppa

-a

infinitive — maṛappa

non-past participial nouns — varippa

non-past personal verbs — nīppa, aḷippa, tuṇippa

-ppatu

-atu

non-past participial nouns. — uvappatu

non-past verbal nouns — kiḷippatu, mukiḷppatu

-ppar

-ar

non-past personal verbs — maṛappar

-ppal

-al

non-past personal verbs — uraiḷpal

-ppavar

-avar

non-past participial nouns — iruppavar

- ppavaḷ*
 -**avaḷ**
 non-past participial nouns — uṇarppavaḷ
- ppavaṇ*
 -**avaṇ**
 non-past participial nouns — uḷappavaṇ
- ppavai*
 -**avai**
 non-past participial nouns — uṭuppavai
- ppaṇ*
 -**aṇ**
 non-past personal verbs — karappaṇ
- ppaṇa*
 -**a**
 non-past participial nouns — aṇuppaṇa
 non-past personal verbs — takaippaṇa
- ppāṭu*
 -**pāṭu**
 verbal nouns — vaḷappāṭu, mutṭuppāṭu
- ppām*
 -**ām**
 non-past personal verbs — niṇruppām
- ppāy*
 -**āy**
 imperative/optative — kāṇṭaippāy
 non-past participial nouns — kaṇṇu mēyppāy pōl
 non-past personal verbs — tuṇappāy, poyppāy
- ppār*
 -**ār**
 non-past participial nouns — nekiḷppār
 non-past personal verbs — tuṇappār
- ppāl*
 -**āl**
 non-past participial nouns — nōy uḷappāl

- ppāṇ*
 -**āṇ**
 non-past participial nouns — *nāṇ nūlaippāṇ*
 non-past personal verbs — *oḷippāṇ*
- ppi-*
 -(p)**pi**
 causative stem — *pacappittōr*
- ppiṇ*
 -**iṇ**
 conditional — *ninaippīṇ, iruppiṇ*
- ppiṇum*
 -**iṇum**
 concessive of fact — *aḷippiṇum*
- ppu*
 -(p)**pu**
 verbal nouns — *maṇappu*
- ppum*
 -**um**
 non-past adjectival participle — *eṭuppum ... mālai*
 non-past personal verbs — *eṭuppum*
- ppen*
 -**en**
 non-past personal verbs — *maṇappen(ō), niṇuppen*
- ppēm*
 -**ēm**
 non-past personal verbs — *aṇivippēm*
- ppēṇ*
 -**ēṇ**
 non-past participial nouns — *toṭuppēṇ*
 non-past personal verbs — *uvappēṇ*
- ppōy*
 -**ōy**
 non-past participial nouns — *ciṇappōy*

- ppōr
-ōr
non-past participial nouns — malarppōr
- pa
-a
infinitive — niṛpa
non-past participial nouns — vēṇṭupa
non-past personal verbs — eytupa, kaluḷpa
- pakkam
-pakkam
case markers and postpositions — icai paṭu pakkam, maṇal pakkam
- paṭi
-paṭi
case markers and postpositions — onṛiya paṭi
- patam
patam
case markers and postpositions — varu patam
- paṭu-
(infinitive in (kk)a + paṭu)
passive stem — eṇappaṭutal, kāmuṛappaṭutal, nīṅkappaṭiṇē, kaippaṭukkappaṭṭāy, viyakkappaṭūmor
- patu
-atu
non-past participial nouns — uṇpatu
verbal nouns — kāṇpatu
- par
-ar
non-past personal verbs — kāṇpar
- pal
-al
non-past personal verbs — kāṇpal
- paḷ
-aḷ
non-past personal verbs — eṇpal

- pavar*
 -avar
 non-past participial nouns — koḷpavar
- pavaḷ*
 -avaḷ
 non-past participial nouns — nērpavaḷ
- pavaṇ*
 -avaṇ
 non-past participial nouns — varaipavaṇ
- pavai*
 -avai
 non-past participial nouns — urukupavai
- paṇa*
 -a
 non-past participial nouns — koṭpaṇa
- pāṇkar*
 -pāṇkar
 case markers and postpositions — cimaya-p-pāṇkar
- pāṭu*
 -pāṭu
 case markers and postpositions — paḷ pāṭu
 verbal nouns — ilampāṭu, vaḷappāṭu, muṭṭuppāṭu
- pām*
 -ām
 non-past personal verbs— kāṇpām
- pāy*
 -āy
 non-past personal verbs — eṇpāy
- pār*
 -ār
 non-past participial nouns — eṇpār(um palar)
- pāl*
 -pāl
 case markers and postpositions — ciṛāarpāl

- pāl*
 -*āl*
 non-past participial nouns — enpāl(ai)
- pāṇ*
 -*āṇ*
 non-past participial nouns — enpāṇ
- pāṇ* (*p* + *āṇ*)
 infinitive — kāṇpāṇ
- pi-*
 -(*p*)*pi*
 causative stem — ēṇpikkum
- piṇ(ṇ ē)*
 -*iṇ*
 conditional — kēṭpiṇ
- piṇ*
 case markers and postpositions — peṇkaṇpiṇ, avaṇ piṇ, kuṭi
 p piṇ, *muyaṇkiya piṇṇē*
- piṇrai*
 -*piṇrai*
 case markers and postpositions — kaḷainta piṇrai, nirai-p-piṇrai
- piṇṇar*
 -*piṇṇar*
 case markers and postpositions — ēṇṇiṇ piṇṇar
- piṇṇum*
 -*piṇṇum*
 case markers and postpositions — tappiṇṇu piṇṇum
- pīr*
 -*īr*
 non-past personal verbs — enpīr
- kil*
 compound verb stem — paṭarkirpīr
- pu*
 -*pu* (*p* + *u*)
 infinitive — niṇaipu

	-(p)pu	verbal nouns— <i>piripu</i>
<i>puṭai</i>	-puṭai	case markers and postpositions — <i>kamukiṇ puṭai</i>
<i>purai</i>	-purai	comparison — <i>vēy purai paṇaittōl</i>
	-peṇ	non-past personal verbs — <i>kāṇpeṇ</i>
	-ēṇ	non-past participial nouns — <i>kāṇpēṇku</i> (<i>kāṇpēṇ</i> + <i>ku</i>)
		non-past personal verbs — <i>kāṇpēṇ</i>
<i>poḷutu</i>	-poḷutu/pōḷtu	case markers and postpositions — <i>uṇṇum poḷutu</i>
<i>pōy</i>	-ōy	non-past participial nouns — <i>amarpōy</i>
	-ōr	non-past participial nouns — <i>kāṇpōr, irukkiṇpōr</i>
<i>-pōl(a)</i>	-pōl(a)	comparison — <i>aṇal pōl telmaṇi, ūmaṇ pōla</i>
<i>-pōḷtu</i>	-poḷutu/pōḷtu	case markers and postpositions — <i>telitta pōḷtē</i>
<i>-m</i>	-um	non-past adjectival participle — <i>ām, avāam, ayāam, mēn tōl, pōm kuṇṇu</i>
	-(u)m	imperative/optative — <i>ōm, uṇm, tam, vārum</i>

- m**
negative personal verbs — *in̄m*
non-past personal verbs — *caṇm*
- mat̄i**
-mat̄i
imperative/optative — *collumat̄i*
- mar**
-ar
non-past participial nouns — *kāṇmar*
pronouns — *paṭiṇmar*
- maruḷ**
-maruḷ
comparison — *vēy maruḷ paṇaittōḷ*
- mal**
-ā(a)mal
negative adverbial participle — *toypaṭāmal, perāamal*
- mar̄ru(m)**
-mar̄ru(m)
particles — *otti mar̄ru ovvāti, uḷḷal kūṭātu en̄rōy mar̄rum ...*
- maṇ(ṇ ē)/maṇ(ṇ ō)**
-maṇ(ṇ ē)/maṇ(ṇ ō)
particles — *muḷutumaṇ puṇaḷa, pulliyēm maṇṇē, naṭṭaṇai maṇṇō*
- maṇra**
-maṇra
particles — *maṭavai maṇra, citaintatu maṇra*
- maṇār**
-ār
non-past participial nouns — *enmaṇār*
- mā**
-kamā
imperative/optative — *maṇṇukamā, polikamā*
- mā**
particles — *taṭkumā kālē, malarkamā*

-*māṭṭu*

-māṭṭu

case markers and postpositions — *niṇ māṭṭu*, *tamiyōr māṭṭu-ē*

-*māṭṭai*

-māṭṭai

case markers and postpositions — *ñāyar māṭṭai*

-*māṇ*

-māṇ

case markers and postpositions — *paṇmāṇum*

-*māttiram*

-māttiram

case markers and postpositions — *muyaṅku māttiram*

māttirai

-māttirai

case markers and postpositions — *kai tōyal māttirai*, *ceyyum māttirai*, *viḷitta māttirai*

-*mātu/mātō*

-mātu/mātō

particles — *niṇaival mātu avar paṇpu*, *kēṭkuvir mātō*, *ēmattai mātō*

-*mār*

-ār

non-past participial nouns — *cāaymār*

-mār

infinitive — *taṇimār*

negative imperative/optative — *kēḷaṇmār*

negative participial nouns — *kēḷaṇmār*

singular and plural — *tōḷimār*

-*māḷa*

-māḷa

particles — *pūṇka māḷa*

-*māṇ*

-āṇ

adjectival nouns — *perumāṇ*

māṇa

māṇa

comparison — aravam māṇa

-micai

-micai

case markers and postpositions — tēr micai, kuṇṇiṇ micai

-miṇ

-īmiṇ

imperative/optative — kēṭṭiṇ

-miṇ

imperative/optative — uṇmiṇ, viyaṇkoṇmiṇ

negative imperative/optative — koḷḷaṇmiṇ, naḱāṇmiṇ

mītu

-mītu

case markers and postpositions — malar mītu

mīmikai

-mīmikai

case markers and postpositions — tuṇkal mīmikai

mutal

-mutal(mutal)

case markers and postpositions — neṇi mutal, kuṇa mutal
tōṇṇi, nēmi mutal

muḷutum

-muḷutum

collectives and universals — malai muḷutum

muṇai

-muṇai

case markers and postpositions — vaḷi muṇai, iṇu muṇai

muṇ

-muṇ

case markers and postpositions — ēṇṇiṇmuṇ, niṇ muṇ

munṇar

-munṇar

case markers and postpositions — tāy munṇar, nāyīṇṇu munṇar

- *mē*
 - īmē**
negative imperative/optative — ceppātīmē
 - mē**
imperative/optative — ceṇmē
- mēl*
 - mēl**
case markers and postpositions — eruttam mēl, ukkattu mēlum, kuṇṇiṇ mēl
- mēliruntu*
 - mēliruntu**
case markers and postpositions — ēṇṇiṇ mēliruntu
- *mai*
 - ā(a)mai**
negative adverbial participle — vaḷāamai, aṇiyāmai
 - mai**
verbal nouns — aṭumai, ēḷaittaṇmai, paṇintamai, cāṇṇṇāṇmai
negative verbal nouns — nalkāmai, varaīyāmai, iṇumpūtu aṇmai, pāyal iṇmai
- *mō*
 - īmō**
imperative/optative — ceytīmō, viyaṇkoṇmō, ceṇmō
negative imperative/optative — aḷātīmō
 - mō**
imperative/optative — uraimō, viyaṇkoṇmō, ceṇmō
- *mōr*
 - ōr**
non-past participial nouns — niṇaiyumōr
- *mōṇ*
 - ōṇ**
non-past participial nouns — aṇiyumōṇ
- *y*
 - *y*
adverbial participle — ulāy, kāay, ēey, kūuy

yāṅkum

yāṅkum

collectives and universals — *yāṅkum ... uḷavō*

yā _um

yā _um

collectives and universals — *yāṅkaṇum, yāṇṭōrum, yātum, yātonṇum, yārkkāṇum, yāraiṇum, yāvatum, yāvarum, yāvīrum, yāvīr āyiṇum, yāvaiṇum*

yāḷa

yāḷa

particles — *maṇiyum pōlum yāḷa niṇ naṇṇar mēṇiyum*

-va

-a

adjectival nouns — *katava*
non-past participial nouns — *tōṇruva*
non-past personal verbs — *keṭuva, paṭukuva, pukuva, pōlva*

-vatu

-atu

adjectival nouns — *maṭavatu*
non-past participial nouns — *poykkuvatu, citaikuvatu, uṇuvatu*
non-past personal verbs — *vēvatu*
non-past verbal nouns — *varuvatu, urivatu, muṭivatu*

-vatai

-atai

non-past verbal nouns — *varuvatai*

-vam

-am

non-past personal verbs — *kāṅkuvam, peṭkuvam, aṇcuvam*

-vayam

-vayam

case markers and postpositions — *vaiyai vayam āka*

vayin

-vayin

case markers and postpositions — *poruḷ vayin, nam vayin, neṭuvayin*

- var*
 - r**
 - singular and plural — iruvar
 - ar**
 - non-past participial nouns — nacaivar
 - non-past personal verbs — varuvar, ayarvar, koṭukkuvar, perukkuvar
 - past participial nouns — eṇṇavar
 - avar**
 - adjectival nouns — puṇarppinavar
 - negative participial nouns — aruḷātavar, taḷarātavar, uraikkallātavar
 - var**
 - adjectival nouns — nakaivar, pakaivar
- varai*
 - varai**
 - case markers and postpositions — malai varai, kaṭa varai, col varai
- val*
 - al**
 - non-past personal verbs — vāḷval, varuval, kāṇkuval
 - verbal nouns — maṇaval
- vaḷi*
 - vaḷi**
 - case markers and postpositions — vēṇṭu vaḷi, vanta vaḷi, uḷ vaḷi
- vaḷ*
 - aḷ**
 - non-past participial nouns — celkuvaḷ, uṇarppavaḷ
 - vaḷ**
 - non-past personal verbs — uvakkuvaḷ, varuntuvaḷ, nāṇuvaḷ, kalaṇkuvaḷ
- vaṇ*
 - aṇ**
 - negative participial nouns — aḷuntātavaṇ

non-past participial nouns — *etirkoḷvaṇ*, *varaipavaṇ*

non-past personal verbs — *akaḷkkuvaṇ*, *māṟruvaṇ*, *varukuvaṇ*,
varuvaṇ

-van

adjectival nouns — *kolaivaṇ*, *vilaivaṇ*

-vaṇa

-a

non-past participial nouns — *koḷvaṇa*

-vaṇar

-ar

non-past participial nouns — *viraivaṇar*

(participial noun + infinitive)

non-participle as participle — *viraivaṇar* ... *pukutara*

-vaṇaḷ

-aḷ

non-past participial nouns — *niṇaivaṇaḷ*

-vaṇaṇ

-aṇ

non-past participial nouns — *viraivaṇaṇ*

-vaṇeṇ

-eṇ

non-past participial nouns — *viraivaṇeṇ*

-vā

-ā

negative adjectival participle — *cāvā*

-vātu

-ātu

negative personal verbs — *cāvātu*

negative adverbial participle — *kalavātu*

-vām

-ām

adjectival nouns — *iruvām*

non-past personal verbs — *iruvām*, *celvām*

- vāy*
 -*āy*
 imperative/optative — *mēvāy*
 non-past participial nouns — *varuvāy nī*
 non-past personal verbs — *pōkuvāy*
- vāy*
 case markers and postpositions — *tāriṇ vāy, nōkkum vāy*
- vār*
 -*ār*
 negative participial nouns — *mēvār*
 non-past participial nouns — *viḷuvār, aṇivār*
 non-past personal verbs — *iṇaiṇcuvār*
- vāl*
 -*āl*
 non-past participial nouns — *āṭuvāl aṇi nutal*
 non-past personal verbs — *celvāl*
- vāṇ*
 -*āṇ*
 non-past participial nouns — *cuṭuvāṇ pōla*
 non-past personal verbs — *amaivāṇ(ō), parivāṇ(āl), amaikuvāṇ*
- vāṇ* (*v* + *āṇ*)
 infinitive — *kuḷaivāṇ, nīkkuvāṇ*
- vi-*
 -*vi*
 causative stem — *puṇarvittal*
- vi*
 -*i*
 adjectival nouns — *kaḷvi*
 non-past participial nouns — *aṭuvi, uṇaivi*
- vi*
 verbal nouns — *vēḷvi*
- viyal*
 -*viyal*
 case markers and postpositions — *puricai viyal uḷḷōr*

- vir*
- avir**
 adjectival nouns — ūravir
 past participial nouns — cāṇṇavir, kaṇṭavir
- ir**
 adjectival nouns — kiḷavir
 non-past personal verbs — iraṅkuvir
- vīr*
- īr**
 non-past participial nouns — varuvīr
 non-past personal verbs — viṇavuvīr
- vu*
- vu**
 verbal nouns — kaḷaivu
- vem*
- em**
 non-past personal verbs — kāṇkuvem
- veṇ*
- eṇ**
 non-past participial nouns — kūruveṇ pōla
 non past personal verbs — taṇṭuveṇ
- vēṇṭā*
 (infinitive/verbal noun + **vēṇṭā**)
 negative imperative/optative — varunta vēṇṭā, niṇaikka vēṇṭā,
 pariyal vēṇṭā
- vēṇṭum*
 (infinitive/verbal noun + **vēṇṭum**)
 imperative/optative — vaḷara vēṇṭum, aruḷal vēṇṭum
- vēm*
- ēm**
 non-past participial nouns — kaṇṇoṭu celvēṃ
 non-past personal verbs — poruvēm, nōvēṃ(ō)
- vēṇ*
- ēṇ**
 non-past participial nouns — taruvēṇ

non-past personal verbs — irukkuvēṇ, aṛikuvēṇ, aṛivēṇ,
maruḷvēṇ

-vai
-ai
adjectival nouns — niḷalavai, vaḷaiyiṇavai
non-past personal verbs — ceykuvai, puṇarkuvai, āvai, eṇcuvai,
kataḷvai

-vai
verbal nouns — vēyvai

vai
vai
causative stem — niṛaiya vaitta

vaikalum
vaikalum
collectives and universals — vaikalum

-vōm
-ōm
non-past personal verbs. — tīrkuvōm

-vōy
-ōy
non-past participial nouns — celvōy

-vōr
-ōr
adjectival nouns — putuvōr
non-past participial nouns — arakkuvōr, valluvōr, ūrkuvōr,
varaivōr

-vōḷ
-ōḷ
non-past participial nouns — iṇaivōḷ, pulampuvōḷ

-vōṇ
-ōṇ
adjectival nouns — kiḷavōṇ
non-past participial nouns — nōkkuvōṇ

attai
 antil
 antō
 am
 amma
 ammā
 arō
 annō
 ānka
 ānku
 ānkē
 ār
 āl
 um
 en(n)a
 ē
 ō
 ōrum
 kāṇ
 kurai
 kol(l)ō
 kon(nu)
 tān
 til(la)
 teyya
 teyyō
 marṛu(m)
 marṛai
 mannē
 man(nō)

manṛa
 mā
 mātu
 matō
 māḷa
 yāḷa

aḥtu ‘it, that one’ (<i>aka.335:3; kuru.18:3</i>)	impar ‘here’ (<i>pura.287:14</i>)
aṅku ‘there’ (<i>kuri:97</i>)	irubar ‘two people’ (<i>aink.64:3</i>)
attupai ‘that much’ (<i>kuri:13</i>)	iruvām ‘we two’ (<i>kuru.237:4</i>)
atu ‘it, that one’ (<i>pari.15:53; narr.24:9</i>)	iruvīr ‘you two’ (<i>pura.45:6</i>)
ampar ‘yonder’ (<i>peru:117</i>)	iruvēm ‘we two’ (<i>kuri.21</i>)
av ‘those items, those things’ (<i>pari.4:33</i>)	iv ‘these ones’ (<i>pari.4:33</i>)
avaṇ ‘there’ (<i>ciru:143</i>)	ivaṇ ‘here’ (<i>narr.4:5</i>)
avar ‘those men’ (<i>pari.5:40</i>)	ivar ‘these people’ (unidentified) (<i>narr.6:6</i>)
avar ‘those women’ (<i>pari.7:44</i>)	ivar ‘these boys’ (<i>pura.46:3</i>)
avar ‘those people’ (<i>pari.4:74</i>)	ivar ‘these women’ (<i>pura.201:1</i>)
avaḷ ‘she’ (<i>narr.159:8</i>)	ivaḷ ‘she’ (<i>kuru.229:1</i>)
avan ‘he’ (<i>pari.20:82</i>)	ivaṇ ‘he’ (<i>kuru.229:1</i>)
avai ‘those items, those things’ (<i>pura.257:10; pari.15:7</i>)	ivai ‘these ones’ (<i>narr.12:7</i>)
aruvar ‘six people’ (<i>tiru:255</i>)	inru ‘this day’ (<i>narr.48:1</i>)
anru ‘that day, then’ (<i>aka.19:1</i>)	inrai ‘this day’ (<i>kuru.199:6</i>)
anrai ‘that day’ (<i>narr.48:1</i>)	inai ‘of this nature’ (<i>narr.349:5</i>)
anai ‘of that nature’ (<i>narr.70:6</i>)	īnkaṇ ‘here’ (<i>narr.70:7</i>)
ānkaṇ ‘there’ (<i>pati.23:24</i>)	īnku ‘here’ (<i>pura.36:11</i>)
ānku ‘there’ (<i>pari.6:104</i>)	īnku ‘in this manner’ (<i>narr.55:12</i>)
ānku ‘then’ (<i>pura.152:21</i>)	īṇṭu ‘here’ (<i>pura.38:16</i>)
ānku ‘in that manner’ (<i>kali.18:7</i>)	īṇṭai ‘here’ (<i>kuru.54:1</i>)
ānkē ‘then’ (<i>kali.90:15</i>)	ītu ‘this one’ (<i>pura.208:3</i>)
āṇṭu ‘there’ (<i>pura.38:16</i>)	ītōḷi/īttoḷi ‘here’ (<i>kali.117:13</i>)
āṇṭai ‘there’ (<i>kali.20:16</i>)	īraimpatiṇmar ‘100 people’ (<i>peru:415</i>)
iḥtu ‘this one’ (<i>kuru.158:6</i>)	īṇ ‘here’ (<i>aink.401:5</i>)
īnku ‘here’ (<i>kuru.175:5</i>)	utu ‘that one’ (<i>narr.96:3</i>)
itu ‘this one’ (<i>narr.47:6</i>)	umpar ‘yonder’ (<i>narr.198:3</i>)
	uv ‘those ones’ (<i>pari.4:33</i>)
	uvaḷ ‘she’ (<i>pari.11:123</i>)

uvan 'he' (pari.12:55)	ennai 'for what reason?/why?/how?' (pari.6:94)
ūṅkaṇ 'yonder' (narr.246:1)	enai 'how many' (pura.301:7)
ūṅku 'before, then' (narr.101:9)	enai 'of what nature?' (pura.136:15; aka.369:1)
eṅku(m) '(every)where' (kali.144:16)	aivar 'five people' (tiru.254)
eṅṅāṇru 'when?' (kali.110:16)	ottan 'one man' (kali.61:1)
eṇmar 'eight people' (pari.8:5)	otti 'one woman' (kali.143:8)
ettupai 'how much?' (pura.141:13)	oru tān 'he alone' (pura.76:13)
ev 'which' (pura.187:3)	oru nī 'you alone' (tiru.294)
evaṇ(ar) 'where (is he)?' (kuru.126:2)	orutti 'one woman' (pura.144:11)
eval 'which one?' (pari.6:91)	oruva 'you, one person' (tiru.262)
evan 'what?' (narr.130:9)	orubar 'one person' (aiṅk.64:3)
evan 'for what reason?' (kali.60:14)	oruvan 'one man' (aka.110:14)
eḷuvar 'seven people' (cīru.113)	oruvanēn 'I, one man' (kali.140:12)
en 'why?' (narr.334:9)	oruvir 'you' (malai.218)
enru 'what day?', 'any day' (narr.1:2)	oruvīr 'you' (pura.45:5)
enna 'what?' (narr.130:9)	onpatinmar 'nine people' (pati.pa.5:19)
enna 'of what sort?' (narr.94:7)	ōr yān 'I alone' (kuru.6:4)
ennatu 'of what kind?, of any kind' (narr.219:3)	ṇāṅkar 'that time' (peru.196)
ennar 'person of what sort?' (narr.64:1)	ṇāṅru 'that day' (narr.218:1)
ennal 'woman of what sort?' (narr.312:9)	ṇāṅrai 'that day' (narr.287:7)
ennan 'man of what sort?' (kuru.33:2)	tām 'they' (matu.422)
	tām 'they, those things' (kali.9:19)
	tām 'they indeed' (kali.9:19)
	tān 'he' (malai.559)
	tān 'she' (narr.12:9)
	tān 'it (indeed)' (kali.21:10)
	tān 'self' (aiṅk.303:2)

nām ‘we’	(<i>kuṛi</i> :22)	yār ‘who? (masculine)’	
nālvar ‘four people’	(<i>aka</i> .86:12)		(<i>puṛa</i> .77:6)
nān ‘I’	(<i>pari</i> .20:82)	yār ‘who (unidentified)?’	
nī ‘you’	(<i>kuṛi</i> :8)		(<i>narr</i> .269:9)
nīyir ‘you’	(<i>aka</i> .8:17)	yāraḷ ‘who (feminine)?’	
nīr ‘you’	(<i>matu</i> :738)		(<i>kuṛu</i> .19:5)
nūrruvar ‘The Hundred’		yārīr ‘who (human plural)?’	
	(<i>kali</i> .52:2)		(<i>puṛa</i> .141:5)
patinmar ‘ten people’	(<i>pari</i> .8:4)	yārēm ‘who?’	(<i>kali</i> .82:18)
patinorumūvar ‘33 people’		yārai ‘who?’	(<i>narr</i> .395:1, 2)
	(<i>tiru</i> :167)	yāvaṇatu ‘where?, how?’	
pannoruvar ‘eleven people’			(<i>puṛa</i> .301:8)
	(<i>pari</i> .8:7)	yāvatu ‘in what way?, how?’	
mūvar ‘three people’	(<i>poru</i> :54)		(<i>narr</i> .331:11)
mūvīr ‘you three’	(<i>puṛa</i> .109:2)	yāvar ‘who?’	(<i>pati</i> .20:21)
yā ‘what?’		yāvaḷ ‘who?’	(<i>aiṅk</i> .370:4)
	(<i>narr</i> .198:1; <i>puṛa</i> .167:9)	yāvīr ‘who?’	(<i>puṛa</i> .88:1)
yāṅkaṇam ‘in what way?, how?’		yāvai ‘what?’	(<i>aka</i> .42:7)
	(<i>puṛa</i> .30:11)	yān ‘I’	(<i>kuṛi</i> :12)
yāṅṇaṇam ‘in what way?, how?’			
	(<i>narr</i> .338:6)		
yāṅkaṇum ‘anywhere’	(<i>aka</i> .7:3)		
yāṅku ‘in what way?’	(<i>narr</i> .29:6)		
yāṅkum ‘everywhere’			
	(<i>puṛa</i> .56:15)		
yāṇṭu ‘where?’	(<i>puṛa</i> .86:3)		
yāṇṭu ‘where?/how?’	(<i>narr</i> .110:9)		
yāṇṭai ‘where?’	(<i>kuṛu</i> .379:1)		
yātu ‘what kind?, why?’			
	(<i>pari</i> .20:44)		
yām ‘we’	(<i>malai</i> :53)		

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NOTE: This index contains items which are not included in the “Appendix.” Accompanying each entry is the number of the page where the item is treated. See “Appendix” for various affixes, case markers, postpositions, particles, and pronouns.

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